CREATING A CULTURE OF COVENANT

A THESIS

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This project is dedicated to

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CONTENTS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis will demonstrate that the call of the redemptive leader is to create a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation. The intent of this project is to develop a framework that creates a community, whereby the heart and subsequent actions of the leader create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop. The following key questions will be explored:

- What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

- Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

- How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

- What are the evidences of transformation?

The author's hypothesis is that key leader behaviors model a culture of covenant. These behaviors were defined and prepared as a survey pre-test amongst Coastlands Executive Team members. Key strategic interventions based on leader weaknesses were practiced, followed by a post-test. A Biblical theology of the idea of covenant will serve as the core concept in the theological framework. Literature review features both organizational and church culture studies, as well as corporate and business culture studies. Precedent research concerning the nature of covenant, both with God and man, was included.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

The Problem and Its Setting

There is more *information* available today on how to live the Christian life than ever before, yet there is seemingly less *transformation* in Christians than ever. Insight does not guarantee change. According to the 10-10-80 principle, ten percent of people will change when given good information and ten percent of people will not change no matter how good the information; but eighty percent of people will experience true transformational change when there is information coupled with genuine relationships.

> New Rule #1: Personal relationships count. Institutions don't.
> Organizations that have played a major role in the shaping of
> America this century hold limited promise of maintaining their
> influence in the coming decades. Churches, prestigious universi-
> ties, government, major corporations, the courts–all are invested
> with authority by the majority of the population, but their positions
> as influence agents are tenuous…the elements that will define
> purpose, value and direction are personal relationships and inter-
> personal networks.[1]

Christian organizations are for transformation and not just information. Yet, too often churches and para-church ministries concentrate on the informational aspect, and sorely lack the relational part. In the words of David Murrow:

> Christ didn't hand out a study guide; He demonstrated a life
> pleasing to God. His example, even more than His words, pro-
> duced eleven men who shook the world...it's a band of believers
> sharing their lives and following Jesus as a team. When iron
> sharpens iron, sparks fly! They must know each other deeply,
> trust each other implicitly, and be willing to speak the truth even
> when it hurts. [2]

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[1] George Barna, *Generation Next* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1995), 108.
[2] David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 34-35.

Why does this happen? What are the ingredients necessary in a Christian organization to bring about genuine transformation? This thesis will attempt to answer that question by positing that redemptive leaders are intentional about creating a culture of covenant to bring about transformation. For the purposes of this study, transformation is defined as a radical change in the nature and character of a person. These changes are evidenced in behavior, attitudes and actions that increasingly conform to the image of God. Redemptive leadership facilitates transformation by creating a relational culture. In this study, the definition of redemptive leadership is, "Purchasing, ransoming, rescuing from bondage."[3]

In order to bridge the current and pervasive gap between mere cognitive understanding and actual heart and life transformation, intentional relationships must be formed. It must be safe in the instructional culture to allow key relationships to form, without it being considered a threat of favoritism or partiality. That relational culture would be covenantal in nature. For the purposes of this study, culture is defined as the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another. Therefore, a culture of covenant is defined as a unilateral commitment to another's "best" in God modeled by the key leader, team members, and ultimately passed on to the next generation. The culture of covenant forms the needful relational bridge spanning the gap between head and heart as follows:

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[3] Drs. Rodney Cooper and Harv Powers, "The Pharos Group". Concepts presented at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in M. Div. Residency One, "Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Development", May 2004. See Appendix 1.

A Culture of Covenant

Mere Head Knowledge ⌒ **Actual Heart Transformation**
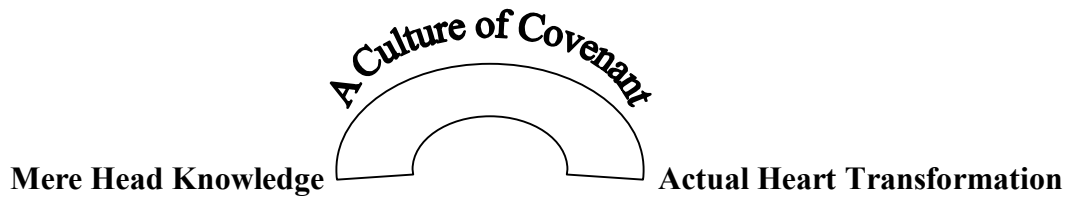
Noted author and youth pastor Josh McDowell was once asked what particular elements of school culture influence young people to live for Christ. His answer was:

> Relationships – and that's probably one of the weaknesses in Christian schools. Even secular education doesn't seem to value training teachers and administrators on how to build relationships. The need for relationships is probably more true now in the post-Modern culture, but it's always been true biblically. There's a study that was done by Dartmouth Medical School and the YMCA USA – secular groups. They concluded that from the moment children are born, their brain is biologically and physically (not emotionally) wired for relationships. One, you must build what they call living, intimate connections with children, or the children will walk away from your values and truth. You must build a relationship with them. Second, you must model that very truth for them. Talk about the secular telling the Church, the pastor, the youth pastor, the elders, Christian teachers and the schools– we had better start building relationships…unless Christian schools work with parents to build loving intimate relationships and connections with kids, we will fail to counteract pop culture because it's not the truth that's going to turn them around; it's relationships.[4]

For example, we will consider the instructional aspect of the church. The Christian education venues with which the author is most familiar are middle to upper-middle socioeconomic churches, the majority of which sponsor Christian schools. The geographic location is predominantly New England, with forays into New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. These churches and schools are populated by a majority of Caucasians[5], although their summer camp

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[4] Josh McDowell, interview by Derek Keenan, "Christian Schooling Makes a Difference If…," *Christian School Education*, Vol. 8, no. 1 (2004-2005): 19-20.

[5] Notable exceptions are: Manhattan Christian Academy, New York, NY; Community Christian Academy, Lowell, MA; and Mount Hope Christian School, Burlington, MA.

ministries often feature a significantly broader range of races and ethnicities. Whether the emphasis is on the geographical location or on a Christian school, these instructional institutions continue to perpetrate the gap between mere head knowledge and actual heart transformation. In Christian education settings across the United States, men and women endeavor to instill Biblical knowledge in their students. Congregations, Sunday schools, children's churches, summer camps, and Christian schools order curriculum, train staff, and raise funds to provide age/grade appropriate instructional settings. Volunteers are amassed to strategize and formulate the most effective way to evangelize and disciple their charges. The results are often students who can *say* the Bible verse verbatim from memory, but who cannot live it out in real life. Indeed, many students know the Word of the Lord without knowing the Lord of the Word. We do not see the heart and behavior changes indicative of real spiritual growth because our Christian organizations deal too much in the cognitive, to the exclusion of relational aspects of ministry. Christian organizations model a heavy emphasis on what is known, rather than what is done.

> Busters (born between 1965 and 1983) appreciate instructional
> methods that do not require tacit acceptance and rote memoriza-
> tion of imposed principles and truths…the Socratic method differ-
> entiates knowledge from opinion, fact from feeling. Busters are
> an emotional group. Ordinarily, they follow their feelings and
> instincts unless a better nonthreatening [sic] strategyis employed…
> This approach is relational in nature. It involves other people in
> the process and usually takes several meetings before a conclusion
> is reached on a weighty matter. This enables closeness among the
> participants and initiates bonds of friendship through the discussion
> process. As a relational generation, this is viewed positively by
> young people.[6]

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[6] George Barna, *Evangelism That Works* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1995), 115.

The conveyance of information takes precedence over the imparting of a life lived. The "conveyance of information" model of teaching/learning relies heavily on the lecture method, with the intent to put in or download as much content as possible into numerous heads simultaneously. This is a carry-over from the Industrial age where standardization of parts and assembly line construction were key in streamlining production. The same essential philosophy was transferred to education.[7]

Concerning the evangelical church's tendencies to value the scientific and visible, Charles Van Engen has observed that, "To achieve our ends in our churches and mission organizations, we may have too easily used secular management principles whose bottom line was measurable production, not faith."[8] No wonder Howard Hendricks has stated that, in our educational system,

> Teaching is telling and testing is essentially a cramming meter–
> teachers are interested in how much a student can cram into his
> head and then regurgitate onto a piece of paper. In a hallway at
> the seminary I once met a student on his way to an exam. He
> seemed to be in a trance, and I started to put my arm around him
> and talk to him. "Prof," he joked, "don't touch me! I'll leak every-
> thing I know."[9]

Hendricks goes on to say, "The average listener in evangelical churches is not excited by the truth–he's embalmed by it."[10] Although it may be difficult to quantify, the relational aspect of truth bridges the gap between the head and the heart by imparting life and hope in ways that only relationships can. Larry Crabb put it this way:

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[7] For further treatment see Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971).

[8] Charles Van Engen, *Mission on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 221.

[9] Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1987), 57.

[10] Ibid., 66.

> It is the actual life of God, the energy with which the Father and Son relate to each other, a set of inclinations put in our hearts by the Spirit and kept alive by His presence. It is a power that is most fully released as we develop a compelling and awe-inspiring vision of who another person is and what he or she could become because of the gospel.[11]

The importance of the relational aspect of truth is often neglected in our discussions. The conveyance of truth must consciously move from information to impartation; from cognition to volition; from the head to the heart. A compare/contrast is illustrated as follows:

Merely Cognitive Paradigm	Increasingly Relational Paradigm
Head	Heart
Information	Impartation
Individualism/Independent	Interdependent
Isolation	Community
Many	Few
Lone Rangering ("I work alone.")	Mentoring ("Come with me.")

Redemptive educators are intentional about relationships. In the words of Dallas Willard,

> The revolution of Jesus is in the first place and continuously a revolution of the human heart or spirit. It did not and does not proceed by means of the information of social institutions and laws, the outer forms of our existence, intending that they would then impose a good order of life upon people who come under their power. Rather, his is a revolution of CHARACTER, which proceeds by changing people from the inside through ongoing personal relationships to God in Christ and to one another.[12]

Redemptive leaders are set apart by their ability to work with people, not merely plans or products. Kouzes and Posner call this *social capital*. "Intellec-

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[11] Larry Crabb, *Connecting* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1997), 66.
[12] Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart* (Colorado Springs: Nav Press, 2002), 15.

tual capital is no longer supreme…there's a new champ in the ring. It's social capital–the collective value of people who know each other and what they'll do for each other. It's human networks that make things happen, not computer networks."[13] The demise of relationally based ministry is humorously traced in the words of Richard Halverson, who said, "Christianity began in Palestine as a relationship, moved to Greece and became an idea, went to Rome and became an institution, then came to America and became an enterprise."[14] Redemptive leaders know that a relationally based context for ministry will require a personal commitment to, and investment in, people. Covenantal commitment is redemptive in nature, as it relies on the grace and power of God to enact transformational change. Covenantal commitment that is redemptive in nature can only be lived out by believers who are dependent upon the present, active power of God to carry them through, when in their own strength they would give up. In order to model redemptive leadership in education we must begin with, and embrace, a relationally based context for ministry. Redemptive ministries have a uniquely relational dynamic at the core of their essential DNA They are incarnational in nature, featuring diverse yet unified teams operating out of shared vision and passion, and eager to model the exhortation to "outdo one another in showing honor."[15] The emerging generation of leaders insists on real relationship and authenticity. It has been said that, "Because spiritual formation is closely

[13] James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 280.

[14] As quoted in Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 163-164.

[15] Rom. 12:10.

aligned with the task of becoming human existing in the framework of human relationships, the task of spiritual formation is lodged in the intentionality [sic] of community."[16] In his seminal work on organizational culture and leadership Edgar H. Schein likens culture and leadership to two sides of the same coin. So inextricable are these two components that Schein goes on to state, "In fact, there is a possibility underemphasized [sic] in leadership research that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture, and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to work with culture."[17] Redemptive leaders are intentional about creating a culture of covenant.

This author takes the following definition of culture for the purpose of this study:

> A pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptations and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.[18]

Schein goes on to list five common meanings of culture, "(1) observed behavioral regularities; (2) norms that evolve; (3) dominant values espoused; (4) the philosophy that guides a group's policy; and (5) the rules for getting along–the "ropes a newcomer must learn."[19]

Culture is important for the development of healthy people. The influence of organizational culture, although often covert, cannot be overstated. Schein observed, "Once we see the world though cultural lenses, all kinds of things begin

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[16] Ray Anderson and Dennis Guernsey, *On Being Family: A Social Theology of the Family* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1985), 119.

[17] Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 2.

[18] Ibid., 9.

[19] Ibid., 8.

to make sense that initially were mysterious, frustrating, or seemingly stupid."[20] Effective redemptive leaders are intentional about modeling culture that is consistently Biblical in its values and praxis.

The culture in particular that this author will consider is a culture of covenant. Our definition of covenant comes from the Hebrew word *berith* from "to cut." The idea here is being cut until the blood flows. Covenant carries with it the commitment to be faithful to those we serve. As the relational aspects of truth are modeled in covenantal commitment and service, others are drawn to the truth of the Gospel and want to be a part of covenanted community. The redemptive leader is one who models the outworking of covenant amongst those he or she leads by laying down his life in obedience to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.[21] A culture of covenant would therefore approximate, by the grace of God, a group of team members who would ultimately lay down their lives for one another.

The particular focus of this thesis will be the itinerating ministry teams of Coastlands Consultants, of which the author is the founder. The ministry setting will be concentrated on these teams of two to eight people as they travel across the Northeast and Eastern seaboard providing on-site mentoring in a variety of Christian venues including Spiritual Emphasis Week, retreats, women's ministries, leadership training, VBS, camp ministry, and teacher training.

This thesis will demonstrate that the call of the redemptive leader is to create a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation. The intent of this

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[20] Ibid., 7.
[21] Jn. 15:13.

project is to develop a framework that creates a community whereby the heart and subsequent actions of the leader create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop. We will explore the following key questions:

- What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

- Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

- How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

- What are the evidences of transformation?

Current assumptions are:

- People are incapable of covenant relationships apart from the grace of God.

- Via the redemptive process, people can grow/morph into covenant relationships for the purpose of transformation.

It is only by the grace of God–not by works–that we are saved.[22] Jesus tells his disciples that no one can come to Him unless the Father enables them.[23] The key distinctive of lasting covenant, from a Christian standpoint, is that it is based not upon good will alone, but on the power of God. Thus, we need the grace of God to respond to His covenant. This grace of God in covenant is further modeled in the reinstatement of Peter, when Jesus asks if he loves Him.[24] Again, it is the direct grace intervention of the Lord that enables Saul to respond to God's call on the road to Damascus.[25] The grace of God is an integral component in covenant

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[22] Eph. 2:8-9.
[23] Jn. 6:44, 65.
[24] Jn. 21:15-17.
[25] Acts 9:3-9.

because, frankly, like Peter and Saul we are unable to consistently respond to or model the covenantal love of Christ. The regular practices of grace and forgiveness are essential in building a culture of covenant; and redemptive leaders are intentional in practicing them.

The redemptive process is developmental in nature, each stage building upon the next.[26] The most painful, traumatic, or crisis points of transformation in our own lives often become the very springboard from which we may minister redemptively in the lives of others. Ultimately, the developmental stages move us from "external doing" and "task accomplishments" to "internal being" and "purpose and meaning." As these developmental stages are internalized, we increasingly minister out of who we are rather than what we do. This is the incarnation and outworking of Colossians 1:27b, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." As the redemptive process continues to mature us we are increasingly able, by grace, to grown/morph into covenant relationships.

Research methodology will employ a pre-test and post-test survey, strategic key leader behavior interventions, as well as interviews and written feedback concerning the fostering of a culture of covenant. The parameters of the project will be limited to Coastlands Executive Team members.

Theological Framework

A Biblical theology of the whole idea of covenant will serve as the core concept. Here we will consider a number of effective, covenantal teams in Scripture, including marriage (i.e. Priscilla and Aquila[27]); mentoring or spiritual

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[26] Cooper and Powers, "The Pharos Group", 2004. See Appendix 1.
[27] Acts 18:24-28

parenting (i.e. Naomi and Ruth,[28] Paul and Timothy[29]); and collegial friendship (i.e. Jonathan and David[30]).

We will also compare/contrast contractual vs. covenantal commitments.

On the topic of covenant, the author will address the work *Covenant and Promise* by John Bright. We will also explore the nature of covenant in both Old and New Testament theologies including *O.T. Theology* by Gerhard Von Rod.

Literature Review

In our consideration of culture we will look at the seminal work of Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. We will then consider church culture and team in the works of James H. Rutz's *Megashift* and *The Open Church*; Edward Schillebeeckx's *The Church With a Human Face*; E. Stanley Ott's *Transform Your Church With Ministry Teams*; George Barnas' *Building Effective Lay Leadership Teams;* Stephen A. Macchias' *Becoming a Healthy Team;* and George Cladis' *Leading the Team-Based Church*. Our considerations will then turn to corporate and business culture, including the following works: James B. Miller's *The Corporate Coach*; Harold E. Johnson's *Mentoring for Exceptional Performance*; Jon R. Katzenbach's *Teams at the Top;* Bill Thrall and Bruce McNicol's *The Ascent of a Leader;* and James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner's *Encouraging the Heart*.

Our considerations of precedent research concerning the nature of covenant will include Jeffrey J Niehaus' *God at Sinai*; F.F. Bruce's *This is That:*

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[28] Ruth 1:16-18
[29] 1 Corinthians 4:17
[30] 1 Samuel 18-20

The New Testament Development of Same Old Testament Themes; John H. Walton's *Covenant: God's Purpose, God's Plan*; Ray S. Anderson's *The Shape of Practical Theology, Historical Transcendence and the Reality of God*, and *Theological Foundations for Ministry*; and the significant work of Keith Intrater, *Covenant Relationships*.

Project Design

This project will demonstrate that the call of the redemptive leader is to create a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation. Using a qualitative research design, we will conduct evaluative research resulting in formative evaluation which answers the question, "How can we move toward the preferred culture?" The author's hypothesis is that key leader behaviors model a culture of covenant. This modeling will impact team members by challenging their own growth. These behaviors will be defined and prepared as a survey pre-test amongst Coastlands Executive Team members. Key strategic interventions based on leader weaknesses will be practiced, after which a second survey post-test will be administered.

The pre and post survey will consist of a forced answer multiple choice instrument based upon four lines of inquiry: (1) key leader behaviors; (2) culture; (3) covenant; and (4) teams. Respondents will select from a Likert scale of four choices: (1) Never; (2) Occasionally; (3) Often; and (4) Always. Thirty questions will be asked of the five Executive Team members, and written comments will be requested.

The specific outcomes of this study are to identify and implement skills that will enable the author to model a culture of covenant within the ministry teams of Coastlands Consultants. She expects to see her questions/assumptions questioned or confirmed, and gain insight and understanding concerning implementations, practice, and ongoing development of a culture of covenant in the ministry teams of Coastlands Consultants.

The author hopes that this thesis will challenge ministry teams to model covenant community in both their personal and ministry contexts so that transformation from the head to heart will be facilitated.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The Core concept of our theological framework is a Biblical theology of the idea of covenant. As stated, the word covenant comes from the Hebrew word *berith* from "to cut." Another Hebrew word, for which the English language has no obvious equivalent, is the word *hesed* (also *hesedh* or *chesed*). The term appears 245 times in the Old Testament, the most consistent rendering translated in the Revised Standard Version as "steadfast love," appearing 178 times. Other meanings include "true love," "love unfailing," "constant love," "strong love," "faithful love," and "lovingkindness."[31] The premier study of *hesed*, by Nelson Glueck, indicates that the term is used not merely of "pals" or "colleagues," but "between people who are in some close relationship to one another."[32] *Hesed* is not even dissolved by death. Naomi praises the Lord, "whose *hesed* has not forsaken the living or the dead."[33] David commended the men of Jabesh-gilead for their *hesed* to Saul when they buried him.[34] *Hesed* is linked with *berith* quite a few times in Scripture. Morris clarifies their relationship as follows, "It is possible to have *hesed* without a covenant, but it is not possible to have a covenant without hesed."[35] Although "covenant" is a legal word, the *hesed* implied, suggesting loyalty, constancy, and love, is part and parcel of true

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[31] For further renderings see Leon Morris, *Testaments of Love: A Study of Love in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1981), 66.
[32] Nelson Glueck, *Hesed in the Bible* (Cincinnati: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1967), 67.
[33] Ru. 2:20.
[34] 2 Sam. 2:5.
[35] Morris, *Testaments*, 69.

covenant. Hosea called the people of God to an attitude of *hesed* ("steadfast love"), placing it over sacrifice in priority.[36] The prophet goes on to exhort Israel to "Reap the fruit of *hesed*"[37] and to "hold fast to *hesed* and justice."[38] *Hesed* here is clearly a response to covenant, as well as an essential attitude therein. The Lord has made a covenantal commitment to His people in that even when we fail, He is still there for us. When we fail to live up to our end of the relationship, God's *hesed* carries our end also. Because of God's covenant faithfulness to us, we may also be in covenant with one another. Walter C. Wright sees *hesed* as a model for servant leaders. He writes:

> This is the model we have for being servant leaders who are full of mercy, who are keepers of commitments. It is promising to be there in someone else's future. It is committing ourselves now to be there in the future for another person, knowing that we and the other person will change between now and then. We commit to another recognizing the possibility, perhaps even probability, that they will not live up to our expectations. It means giving another person the space to change and committing to the person on the other side of change…Leadership for Christians means committing ourselves to be there in another's future as a friend, as one who cares, regardless of the circumstances that occur between now and then, regardless of the path our organizational roles may lead us.[39]

Blood covenanting in ancient Syria required a man to write his name in blood on material encased in leather and worn on the arm of his covenant partner.[40] This visible sign of a personal covenant gives new meaning to the phrase "wearing your heart on your sleeve." More formal covenanted agreements, as well as some personal covenants, would follow a six-part form as

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[36] Hos. 6:6.
[37] Hos. 10:12.
[38] Hos. 12:6.
[39] Walter C. Wright, *Relational Leadership* (Waynesboro: Paternoster Press, 2000), 11.
[40] For more on this form see Margaret A. Farley, *Personal Commitments* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1986), 17.

follows: (1) Preamble; (2) Antecedent History; (3) Statement of Substance Concerning Future Relationship; (4) Specific Stipulations; (5) Invocation of the gods as witnesses; and 6) Curses and Blessings.[41] The major Old Testament covenants, although varied, follow this general form. Specifically, there would include the Adamic Covenant (creation), in Genesis 1:1-3:31, where "The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." To cover our sin, blood had to be shed, for "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."[42] Second is the Noahic Covenant, in Genesis 9:1-17, featuring warnings concerning the shedding of blood.[43] Thirdly comes the Abrahamic Covenant, of Genesis 15:7-21, in which God provides Abram with a very vivid and memorable experience of covenant. When He causes Abram to fall into a deep sleep and receive a covenantal promise of an heir, the Lord Himself passes between the pieces of slain animals, once again confirming a blood covenant. The Lord later rebukes His people through the prophet Jeremiah for violating the covenant they made before Him, referencing the blood covenant pieces as follows:

> The men who have violated my covenant and have not fulfilled
> the term of the covenant they made before me, I will treat like
> the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces.[44]

Fourth is the Mosaic Covenant featured in Deuteronomy. This covenant is particularly significant concerning its promises regarding curses and blessings.[45]

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[41] For additional information see Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971).
[42] Heb. 9:22b.
[43] Gen. 5-6
[44] Jer. 34:18.
[45] see especially Deut. 28

Fifth, and finally, is the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7:1-17, promising an heir from whom God's love would never be removed[46] and establishing a house, kingdom, and throne forever.[47]

The work of John Bright and Gerhard von Rad suggest the simultaneous development of two covenant promises developing side by side in Israel's history. The nature of, and expectations concerning, these covenantal promises were quite different from one another. To Hosea, "covenant" meant the Mosaic-Sinaitic covenant (following the pattern of the international suzerainty treaty), involving covenant curses and revocation of promise in the event of disobedience. To Isaiah, "covenant" meant the "unconditional promises to David. The promise was sure; the dynasty would always continue."[48] Bright goes on to indicate that even a simple covenantal phrase–for example, the name of Isaiah's eldest son, Shear-yashub (meaning "a remnant will return"), can have either a threatening or promising connotation. It could be taken to mean that only a *remnant* will return (implying discouragingly few) or it could be interpreted as a hopeful sign that a few *will*, in fact, return to God.[49] Essentially there were two parallel understandings of Israel's election and position under God: the covenants were God's righteous commandments ignored at one's own peril, and the covenants were God's sure and immutable promises which nothing could ever cancel. Von Rad posits that God's intervention into Israel's history rests on these two covenants: the Sinai covenant (Abraham to Joshua), and the covenant with David

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[46] see 2 Sam. 7:15a
[47] 2 Sam. 7:16
[48] John Bright, *Covenant and Promise* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 133.
[49] Ibid., 106.

(and his throne for all time).[50] As God's covenant people, the church continues to live under the tension between obligation and grace. Von Rad suggests that a new covenant does not come about because the regulations revealed in the old covenant were inadequate, but that "the covenant has been broken, because Israel has refused to obey it."[51] The Lord Himself institutes the promise of a New Covenant, which speaks of internal heart change. In accordance with the promise of Ezekial 36:26, He grafts perfect obedience into the hearts of men. The New Covenant is ultimately about a heart change and internal transformation into happy and intentional (as opposed to resentful and forced) obedience.

The coming of the promised Lamb of God, Jesus the Messiah, provided the perfect, spotless sacrifice,

> …for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are
> justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came
> by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement,
> through faith in his blood.[52]

We see in Jesus' sacrifice that covenantal relationships imply absolute blood liability and loyalty. As we partake of the covenant meal of communion, eating His body and drinking His blood, we are dying to self and sin, and entering fully into the life of Christ. Indeed, this is how we are able to overcome the accuser:

> They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word
> of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to
> shrink from death.[53]

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[50] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 1:355.
[51] Ibid., 213.
[52] Rom. 3:23-25a.
[53] Rev. 12:11.

The Scriptures are also clear that words of covenant commitment, both toward our Lord–and then toward others–are vows taken before God. The severity, seriousness and significance of vows cannot be overstated:

> Do not be quick with your mouth; do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.[54]

In the word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi, we see that the Lord had turned away from His people, no longer accepting their offerings because they had broken covenant with their wives.[55] The Lord takes very much to heart our vows of covenant with Him – and with others.

There are several types of covenantal relationships modeled in Scripture. Perhaps the covenantal model we are most accustomed to is marriage. The Greek word *eros* is defined as sexual love between a man and a woman; the state of being "in love." The Biblical analogy is that of a selfless husband laying down his life for his wife–it speaks of Christ and the Church.[56] The covenant of marriage secures the dynastic promises of God to Abram, despite his impatience.[57] The promise of an heir is fulfilled through Sarah, and the bloodline of the covenantal promise continues. In the New Testament, Priscilla and Aquila were a married couple who mentored a very gifted young teacher and speaker named Apollos. He was mentored in their home, and went on to become a gifted

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[54] Ecc. 5:2,4.
[55] Mal. 2:13-15.
[56] Eph. 5:22-33.
[57] See Genesis 16

evangelist to the Jews.[58] Here is one example of a covenantal team, in this case a married couple, pouring into the life and ministry of a young man.

Paul models this covenantal commitment with a number of young men who join him in missionary itinerancy. He exhorts the Corinthians:

> Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord.[59]

Although Timothy was not Paul's natural son, they were covenanted together toward the purposes of God in missionary itinerancy. It was in fact a blood covenant, harkening back to the covenant of circumcision.[60] Despite his apparently tough exterior,[61] Paul evidently had no difficulty expressing his love for those he was mentoring:

> To Titus, my true son in our common faith,[62]
> I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains…I am sending him – who is my very heart – back to you.[63]
>
> It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.[64]

Covenantal mentoring teams in Scripture are not limited to men. The tenacious covenantal commitment of Ruth toward Naomi is a promise of such enduring loyalty that it is often quoted in weddings:

> Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back form you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my

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[58] Acts 18:24-28.
[59] 1 Cor. 4:15-17a.
[60] See Acts 16:3, Genesis 17.
[61] 2 Cor. 11:23-29. Paul was flogged, beaten and shipwrecked.
[62] Tit. 1:4.
[63] Philem. 10, 12.
[64] Philip. 1:7-8.

people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I
will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely,
if anything but death separates you and me.[65]

These are the words of covenant. We see a parallel with Elijah and Elisha in 2
Kings 2:1-12 where Elijah attempts to "shake" Elisha, only to hear the following
several times; "As surely as the Lord lives and as I live, I will not leave you."
Again words of covenant, and again motivated to obtain something in God.[66]
Here it is interesting to note: so great is the desire on the part of the mentor to
release the "trainee" into his own ministry that it is actually contingent upon the
"mentee" to stay. Other Biblical mentoring teams include Moses and Joshua,[67]
Ezra and Nehemiah,[68] and Elizabeth and Mary.[69] Indeed, most of the books of the
New Testament were written by itinerant missionary teams.

> 1 Corinthians 1:1 – Paul and Sosthenes
> 2 Corinthians 1:2 – Paul and Timothy
> Galatians 1:1-2a – Paul…"and all the teachers with me"
> Philippians 1:1a – "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus"
> Colossians 1:1 – "Paul and Timothy, our brother…"
> 1 Thessalonians 1:1a – "Paul, Silas and Timothy…"
> 2 Thessalonians 1:1a – "Paul, Silas and Timothy…"
> Philemon 1 – "Paul…and Timothy our brother…"

Clearly, covenanted mentoring teams drawn together by common purpose and
vision in God are used significantly to forward the gospel.

A third and final example of covenanted team in Scripture is described by
the Greek word *phileo* (brotherly love or friendship). This team does not merely
refer to school chums or pals; it speaks of walking shoulder to shoulder with a
heart that shares a common vision and purpose. It is the out-working of

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[65] Ru. 1:16-18. For further treatment see David Huskins, *The Purpose of a Covenant Heart*
(Shippensburg: Destiny Image, 2003).
[66] 2 Kin. 2:9.
[67] Deuteronomy 31:7-8, 14-47
[68] Ezra 2:1-2
[69] Luke 1:39-45, 56

Philippians 2:2, "…make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose." There is a spirit-quickened mutual destiny about it, even to the knitting together of souls. We see this in the premier example of covenanted friendship, David and Jonathan. Scripture tells us that Jonathan became one in spirit with David, "for he loved him as he loved his own soul."[70]

Jonathan actually gives David the sign of his impending kingship (his princely robe) and even his warrior's belt–a very high honor. This is the sign of the covenant Jonathan makes with David. This verbal, covenantal oath between them is restated several times.[71] These men are both wholly dedicated and totally committed to serving the Lord, and their covenantal friendship is a significant mutual encouragement in doing so. Accountability is another aspect of this type of covenant. David at one point says to Jonathan, "You have brought your servant into a covenant of the Lord with you…if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself,"[72] which is rather a severe way of saying, "If you see anything in my nature or character that dishonors the Lord, you had better tell me." The covenantal commitment between these two warriors is so great that numerous times they risk their lives for one another. This is the true meaning of *berith* – to "cut" a covenant. David's covenantal commitment to Jonathan extended beyond Jonathan's lifetime to his son, Mephibosheth, who, although crippled in both feet,

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[70] 1 Sam. 18:1b.
[71] 1 Sam. 20:16-17, 42; 22:8; 23:18.
[72] 1 Sam. 20:8.

ate at the king's table and was treated as one of David's sons for the rest of his life.[73]

Having looked at effective covenanted teams in Scripture as evidenced by examples in marriage, mentoring, and collegial friendship, we turn to consider four Biblical benefits of covenant which effect transformation.

First, *covenant models the unconditional agape love of God*. Jesus told his followers that, "all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."[74] As the early church lived in a culture of covenant, they shared not only their faith in Christ, but also provision, possessions, and meals, as well as experiencing miracles, and enjoying corporate worship and the favor of all the people.[75] Most significantly, "the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."[76] When relationships are marked by a mutual covenant toward Christ, and His unconditional love is manifest in their midst, others want to be a part of it. Frankly, who does not want to be loved and accepted? Paul's letter to the Romans concerning the ungrafted Gentiles states that, "salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious."[77] God's initial covenant people, jealous of His outreach to the Gentiles, may yet be turned back to Him.

Second, *covenant provides a context for developing vulnerability and trust*. Love of any kind is not possible without a community in which to develop the skills necessary in relationships. Keith Intrater puts it this way: "Our

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[73] 2 Sam. 9.
[74] Jn. 13:35.
[75] Acts 2:43-47
[76] Acts 2:47b.
[77] Rom. 11:11b.

acceptance comes from God alone, but it is worked out through the process of developing trust with people. Covenant relationships remove the fears that hinder one's spiritual growth."[78] True, deep relationships can only be formed when people are willing to risk vulnerability–I call this "In-To-Me-See" (intimacy). Mutual, covenantal transparency allows us to see in one another the promise of Colossians 1:27b, "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Thirdly, *covenant makes it safe to fail.* When modeling, and consistently choosing, the *agape* love of Christ and acting out of others' best interests in His will and purpose, our love for others is not based on their love for us, nor on their performance. Intrater notes: "Covenantal loyalty is not a question of performing up to a certain standard, but of not betraying other's confidence."[79] There is a woman in my church family who works in a setting where she is allowed only so many errors a day. She lives in almost constant fear of "messing up," which of course negatively affects her ability to concentrate and perform to the best of her potential. On the contrary, our relationships within the body of Christ should serve to encourage and inspire one another. Consider Paul and Timothy's letter to Philemon, in which Paul says, "Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints."[80] If it is not truly safe to fail, it is not truly safe to love. This aspect of covenant in team ministry is especially important, as it is easy to "fail" in a broad cross-section of ministry areas. If team members (especially the team leader) pull away

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[78] Keith Intrater, *Covenant Relationships* (Shippensburg: Destiny Image, 1989), 8.
[79] Ibid., 34.
[80] Philem. 7.

when that happens, the risk of creativity and the eagerness to step out and try new things will be lost. Peter did not fail in walking to Jesus on the water; he was a success–because he was the only one who tried.

Finally, *covenant secures the relationship*. As Intrater puts it, "Covenant is the agreement between two parties to be committed to their relationship. Covenant is the commitment that lies behind any successful relationship. Covenant comprises the principles of integrity that guarantee a relationship will be preserved."[81] This is the equivalent of securing the horizontal bar on the cross. We will fail the Lord and one another, even with all the best intentions; but we will also remain committed to Him, and to one another. Covenant keeping is the central issue of redemption, and always an issue of reconciliation. As Intrater goes on to state,

> It takes courage to make covenant. It takes courage to be determined not to be unfaithful. Too many people's hearts are wavering so that they could never bring themselves to make a firm commitment. It takes courage to forge your heart to be perfect toward another person. The word perfect does not mean flawless in performance. Perfect means being faithful to a covenant.[82]

As believers committed to Biblical relationships, we must be alert to "covenant counterfeits". Many a potential covenantal relationship is never entered into, or is sabotaged early by counterfeits perpetrated by the enemy, the world, or even our own flesh. No wonder Scripture exhorts: "A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray."[83] We must consider what a covenant is not. It is *not* ownership of a person, people or group.

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[81] Intrater, *Covenant Relationships*, 11.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Prov. 12:26.

We are stewards of *all* our relationships; we do not "own" people, or even ministries. Covenant does not allow for manipulation. On the contrary, we are to consistently seek God's best for the individual or team; it is *never* about serving our own needs. Covenant is *not* to "use" people to forward or build our ministries. *No;* it is just the opposite. Ministry is a springboard or launching pad, a home plate for the *release* of people into their giftings and callings. Individuals are more important than institutions; people are more important than papers. Covenant does not make you someone's "boss" or "overseer", although accountability may be part of the relationship. I prefer to think of it in under-girding terms like an "under seer"–a submarine watching for potential enemy fire from below, or an intercessor–supportive, but increasingly invisible as the person being mentored arises into his/her arena (which may not be exactly the same as yours). Covenant is *not* an excuse to violate people's emotional or physical boundaries, or in any way threaten them, but to lift them up. The only covenant that includes sexual expression is the marriage covenant. As C.S. Lewis puts it, "Eros will have naked bodies/Friendship naked personalities."[84] (We have seen this with David and Jonathan.) *Storge* in a mentoring context of any kind bears its own unique marks of intimacy (i.e. Paul, "To Timothy, my true son in faith").[85] Generally, cross-generation and cross-gender teams may best guard their hearts by heeding Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older

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[84] C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1960), 71.
[85] 1 Tim. 1:2a.

women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity."[86] Keith

Intrater has such a clear word concerning counterfeits, it bears repeating in its

entirety:

> If there is some aspect of life in the Spirit which is being done
> improperly, our response must not be to abandon it but to find the
> appropriate and most genuine way of expressing it. If we do not
> have this approach, we will be easily diverted every time we encounter
> a demonic counterfeit of something that God genuinely desires to
> incorporate into our lives. We will turn away and abandon the very
> thing which the counterfeit is trying to do away with or pervert.[87]

Biblical covenantal commitment in team ministry differs a good deal from

the current contractual model. Ministry team members in the contractual model

usually sign an agreement saying, "I will serve *x* days for *x* pay," etc. Covenanted

teams have a vision that sounds more like, "I will consistently seek God's best for

the people we are serving, and the other team members." This is Romans 12:10

in action. Team members are not thinking, "Hey! This is not in my contract!" On

the contrary, we should see the outworking of Philippians 2:3-4. The motivation

is not, "What is in this for me?" but "How can I serve them, help them excel in

God?" Contracts usually limit the parameters of service, not so covenants.

Sometimes one pays the ultimate sacrifice in confessing Jesus Christ,[88] and

sometimes one is called upon to sacrifice ultimately for one's friend.[89]

Written contracts are usually static and closed in scope. Covenantal teams

are fluid and open, allowing in and welcoming new team members or releasing

them as the ministry needs change, or as the Lord directs. There is no "territorial

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[86] 1 Tim. 5:1-2.
[87] Intrater, *Covenant Relationships*, 61.
[88] Hebrews 11:35-38
[89] John 15:13

preservation" (i.e. "Hey! That's my thing in ministry! I'm the only one that can do that."). On the contrary, the team leader in covenantal models steps back, releasing team members into the fullness of their giftings and callings, much like Andrew introducing Simon Peter to Jesus,[90] or like Barnabas making way for Saul/Paul.[91] The team leader acts as a networking catalyst and pioneer, releasing others into ministry.

Although both contractual and covenantal commitments may be written down, covenant relationships are written not only on paper, but also on hearts:

> You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.[92]

Biblical covenant is significantly more than mere contract. It is not simply a bilateral agreement between two parties, obligating them to certain agreements under pain of penalty. In the words of Steven Shelby: "If one believes that the foundation of all human relations is contract and not covenant, it will be very difficult to build a uniquely biblical covenant community."[93]

Building a uniquely Biblical covenant community is a primary goal in redemptive leadership. Redemptive ministries are focused on transformation, the internal heart change that occurs when information is paired with committed relationship and community. The contention of this thesis is that the heart, and subsequent actions, of the leader can model and create a safe culture where

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[90] John 1:40-42
[91] Acts 11:25-26, Acts 13
[92] 2 Cor. 3:2-3.
[93] Steven T. Shelby, *Developing a Theology of Ministry Centered on the Covenant of Grace* (GCTS, 2002), 46.

covenant relationships are likely to develop for the purpose of transformation. The leader cannot force, rush, or manipulate covenant, only create a culture where conditions are favorable and the likelihood of covenant occurring is high. A redemptive leader with a view toward developing covenantal culture would consciously model the behaviors cited previously when considering the Biblical benefits of covenant. Translated into behaviors, they would be modeled by the leader as follows:

Biblical Benefit of Covenant	Behaviors of Leader
Covenant models the unconditional *agape* love of God	• Love and care of team members is not performance-based. • Decisions are made based on God's best for team members at any cost to the leader. • Confrontation, when needed, is done in the spirit of Ephesians 4:15, "speaking the truth in love." • Listening is key; communication is open.
Covenant provides a context for developing vulnerability and trust.	• The leader is safe and approachable to team members. • The leader models appropriate transparency. • The leader trusts team members, acting as a catalyst, releasing others into ministry.
Covenant makes it safe to fail.	• The leader keeps team member confidences. • The leader does not withdraw from the commitment to the team members in light of their failure. • The leader does not publicly rebuke team members.
Covenant secures the relationship.	• The leader remains available/keeps lines of communication open even if team members leave the ministry.

• The leader is prayerfully supportive of the team members, whatever their role or for however long.

To explore this contention that the heart of the leader is key concerning covenantal culture, we will consider six key aspects of Discipleship Culture, using a compare/contrast model: The Pharisees and their disciples, and Jesus and His disciples. We will consider: (1) the Source of the Leader's Identity, (2) the Type of System, (3) Descriptions and Titles, (4) Heart Accessibility, (5) the "John 10 Test", and (6) Old or New Covenant?

KEY ASPECTS OF DISCIPLESHIP CULTURE	
Heart of the Leader	
PHARISEES & DISCIPLES	JESUS & DISCIPLES
1) Source of Leader's Identity	
In "outward appearance and positions of honor (Mat. 23:5-7)	*In obedience to His Father* (Jn.14:31) *Internal; covenantal*
Doing	Being
2) Type of System	
Concerned with the "letter of the law" i.e. eating grain on the Sabbath (Mt. 12:2)	*Concerned with the Spirit behind the law; i.e. eating with tax collectors and sinners* (Mt. 9:11)
Closed System	Open System
3) Descriptions and Titles	
Enjoy being called "Rabbi" (Mt. 23:7)	*Not to use titles* (Mt. 23:8-10)
Titles of Distinction Important	Titles of Distinction Not Important
4) Heart Accessibility	
They do not practice what they preach (Mt. 23:3)	*Jesus is approachable in spite of the rebuke of the crowd* (Mt. 20:29-34)
Invulnerability	Vulnerability

5) The "John 10 Test"	
Hired hand – abandons the sheep when the enemy attacks	*Good Shepherd – lays down His life for the sheep*
John 10:12-13	John 10:11
6) Old or New Covenant?	
Concerned with the external, formal law, neglecting the most important (Mt. 23:23)	*Concerned with the internal fruit of repentance; desire to show mercy* (Mt. 23:37-38)
Old Covenant: Law	New Covenant: Grace

A work of redemption, including genuine transformation and resulting in actions evidencing the fruit of repentance, is a prerequisite for leaders called to create a culture of covenant. The leader must continuously have the Redemptive Model[94] working in and through his or her own life. Clearly the Pharisees were not in such a place. Following the letter of the law does not require internal transformation, only external action–heartfelt or not. Jesus, however, is our premier model of a life lived in total heart surrender to the Father's will, and in covenantal commitment within the triune God. For a distinctly fallen–but redeemed–human example, let us consider Saul (to become Paul) and his redemptive process.

In the record of Saul's radical conversion we see the sudden, and then the protracted out-workings, of a genuinely redeemed heart. Once a Pharisee himself,[95] Saul's identity is so totally transformed that he obtains a new name.[96]

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[94] Cooper and Powers, "The Pharos Group", 2004. See Appendix 1
[95] Philip. 3:5.
[96] Acts 13:9.

Now, instead of persecuting the followers of Jesus, he is risking his life to encourage them, and leading varied teams of itinerating believers in sharing the gospel. He and his teams are willing to embrace the same hardships they once imposed on others.[97] In fact, everything Paul does is now for the strengthening of the very people he was once trying to persecute.[98] Indeed, this feisty little man is now proclaiming in writing, evidently without a shred of hesitancy or embarrassment, that he loves them.[99] So complete is Paul's identity in Christ, that he is poured out for those he is sent to–a vessel emptied of himself, filled with the things of God, and poured out for others. "But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith," he writes, "I am glad and rejoice with all of you."[100]

Paul is exemplary of a redeemed leader whose heart has been transformed, and whose actions are now consistent with covenantal commitment. This once law-fueled, hatred-driven Pharisee is now suffering in chains to win his persecutors to saving faith. This is the out-working of the Latin *operato sequitur esse,* "action follows being". Paul has moved from "breathing our murderous threats against the Lord's disciples"[101] to writing to Philemon concerning his son in the faith, Onesimus, of whom he says, "I am sending him–who is my very heart–back to you".[102] As the result of a redeemed heart, Paul is able to model a relational climate that makes covenantal commitment likely to occur.

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[97] Acts 14:22.
[98] 2 Cor. 12:19.
[99] 2 Cor. 11:11.
[100] Philip. 2:17.
[101] Acts 9:1.
[102] Philem. 12.

Although we may initiate covenant with others, or be drawn/invited into covenant by others, ultimately the Holy Spirit is the catalyst in covenant. The Biblical understanding of cutting covenant would leave a rather sobering impression on one who had never "passed between the pieces". Covenant is not to be entered into lightly. Covenantal commitment is only possible in the body of Christ with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Many significant Biblical, human covenants were clearly catalyzed by the Spirit of God. Abraham's chief servant was charged to get a wife for Isaac from among his own people.[103] The servant swore an oath (covenant) that he would do so, and prayed specifically that the Lord would give his master favor. Before he had even finished praying, Rebekah came to the well and said verbatim what the servant had prayed. In this case, the covenant of marriage the servant had been sent to secure, *came as an answer to prayer.*

A second way we see the Holy Spirit initiating covenant is in *response to a prophetic promise from God.* He makes a covenant that we are promised covenant, such as with Abram. The Lord promises him a son who will be his heir.[104] In an effort to "move things along," Abram has a son named Ishmael by Sarai's Egyptian maidservant, Hagar; but he is *not* the son of promise. In spite of this, God re-ups his covenant with Abraham (evidently the protracted waiting has worked transformation within Abram, resulting in a new identity and subsequent name change from the Lord), and institutes circumcision.[105] After even more time

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[103] Gen. 24:1-27.
[104] Gen. 15:4.
[105] Gen. 17:1-14.

passes, the promised heir is born.[106] Incredibly, the story is not over. The Lord

tests Abraham yet again concerning his promised heir, asking him to sacrifice

Isaac, and then the Lord Himself providing the sacrifice.[107] God, in His mercy

and grace, makes, provides, secures, tests, and restores His prophetic promise of

an heir to Abram, changing *him* in the process.

Another type of Biblical, Holy Spirit quickening of covenant occurs to

establish or continue a vision or purpose of the Lord's, for example, the building

of the temple. Although David had it in his heart to do this, the Lord excluded

him, as he was a man of war, and transferred the task to his son, Solomon.[108]

Here we see the sovereignty of God in election concerning who will carry out His

promises. We know Biblically that the patriarchal blessing does not always fall to

the eldest.[109] The task of leading the Israelites into the promised land was

forfeited by Moses due to his failure to honor the Lord as Holy, and thus the task

was passed on to his young apprentice, Joshua.[110] This leads to the fourth

example of a Holy Spirit quickened covenant– a transfer of ministry.

The quickening of covenant in *transfer of ministry* is evidenced in the

aforementioned mentoring relationship of Elijah and Elisha. The Lord

specifically tells Elijah to anoint Elisha as his successor,[111] which he does. Elisha

promptly leaves his home and family and wholeheartedly enters into ministry

with Elijah. Evidently he is faithful for a season of time as a servant to Elijah

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[106] Gen. 21:1-2.
[107] Gen. 22:1-14.
[108] 1 Chron. 28:2-7.
[109] See the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh, Gen. 48:12-20.
[110] Deut. 34:9.
[111] 1 Kin. 19:16.

until the transfer occurs, the sign of which is the parting of the Jordan with Elijah's cloak.[112] Sadly, Elisha's "apprentice" is not so faithful, and his heart is not fully committed to the Lord, as we see in his unfaithfulness.[113]

In the New Covenant, we see further evidences of Holy Spirit-quickened covenant particular to team ministry, as the body of Christ fasts, prays, and lays hands on those the Lord calls out. This is the case in the initial commissioning of Barnabas and Saul.[114] The initial call to covenant, prompted by the Spirit of God, *will be recognized and called out by the body of Christ.* When Paul and Silas were in Thessalonica, even the Jews (who were jealous) were shouting, "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here."[115] Even enemies can verify the purposes of God in covenanted ministry teams.

Paul himself appeals to the corporate witness of the body of Christ concerning the integrity of his fellow workers. In writing to the Corinthians, he cites the enthusiasm and initiative of Titus, as well as his selection by other churches to accompany Paul and the team.[116] Paul also writes to the Philippians concerning the life and ministry of his fellow soldier, Epaphroditus, who had nearly died due to illness, exhorting the believers to welcome and honor him because of his commitment.[117] Time and again in Scripture we see the covenantal nature of ministry confirmed in a body of believers; and though the teams and locations change, the Spirit of the testimony is the same. These followers are sold

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[112] 2 Kin. 2:1.
[113] See 2 Kings 5:19-27. Gehazi's heart is evidenced here.
[114] Acts 13.1-3.
[115] Acts 17:6.
[116] 2 Cor. 8:16-21.
[117] Philip. 2:25-30.

out, wholly dedicated and totally committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. the vertical bar of the cross), and as a result are covenantally committed to the living out of covenant with one another (i.e. the horizontal bar of the cross). The two bars of the cross are in this way in fulfillment of Luke 10:27, which states, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself." The Lord's sovereignty nails the horizontal bar of covenanted commitment on our lives. Ultimately, we do not choose the people, He does.

Finally, regarding the quickening of the Holy Spirit in human covenant relationships, ultimately *all covenant is God-ward.* People are responding to the Lord. One's initiative toward a person in covenantal commitment is actually a response to God. Indeed, a response to someone else's covenantal initiative is also, ultimately, a response to God.

The single best example of this is the response of Mary to the Lord's covenantal promise to her concerning the birth of Jesus.[118] The angel appears to Mary with the prophetic promise. She responds, initially, with one simple question. "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel answers her thus, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." The angel then gives Mary a sign of the covenant–her relative Elizabeth, who was said to be barren, is in her sixth month of pregnancy. Mary responds with a servant's heart, "Let it be to me according to your word", a pretty significant act of faith, as she is unmarried. Here we see a prophetic promise

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[118] Lk. 1:26-38.

which seems impossible, and is questioned. An answer is given; and a sign of the covenant provided, by way of confirmation through the body (in this case, Elizabeth). The more impossible the covenantal commitment seems, the greater verification is provided by the Lord. This verification would have been very important to Mary, as unmarried, pregnant women were stoned to death. Here in Mary's response to the Lord's covenantal initiative, we see that she was willing to lay down her life–the actual meaning of covenant.

In another Biblical example of human covenant as a response to God, we consider the vision given to Peter.[119] While Peter is experiencing a vision from God that appears to command him to eat "unclean" things, the centurion Cornelius is having a similar vision, in which he is sent to Peter. Peter is given to understand that he is not to "call anything impure that God has made clean."[120] The simultaneous outworking of the obedience, and subsequent meeting, of these two men and their colleagues is the promised extension of the Covenant of Grace–the New Covenant–to the Gentiles. Because Peter and Cornelius stepped out of their comfort zones to respond to a prompting of the Holy Spirit, His covenant was extended to the rest of the world. Again, we see that all covenantal commitment, even amongst diverse people groups and cultures, is a response to God.

Finally, *covenant is quickened by the Holy Spirit*, and is neither "merely" emotion nor is it devoid of emotion. The nature of covenant involves an abiding faithfulness that the ebb and flow of emotion often works against. Covenantal

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[119] Acts 10:9-23.
[120] Acts 10:15.

commitment "kicks in" whenever we serve in the body of Christ, outdoing one another in showing honor, when we simply do not feel like it. Covenant is a decision of the mind, an act of the will, resulting in focused, intentional choices made for the benefit of the one loved whether we "feel" anything or not.

On the other hand, what type of covenanted relationship would be truly relational in nature if it did not involve the heart and emotional content? Surely Jesus was covenantally committed to Lazarus with enduring faithfulness; yet, even knowing what was about to happen, He wept at the tomb.[121] Jesus is equally emotive when feeling righteous anger toward those who were buying and selling in the Temple area, driving them out and overturning tables.[122] This is not a grim, emotionless Savior just "gutting out obedience" without feeling anything. When Peter later writes, "Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart,"[123] he is not evangelizing for emotionless, monotonous, and sterile pseudo-commitment. He is referring to something that involves, indeed transforms, the heart. Thus, covenantal commitment is not emotionally driven; neither is it devoid of feeling. I expect Mary "felt" something upon the arrival of the angel. Indeed, Scripture records that she was "greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be."[124] Any time a Holy and Sovereign God speaks to sinful men about anything, we are likely to feel some aspect of terror. Any word of covenant is shot through with the purposes of God,

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[121] Jn. 11:35, 38.
[122] Mt. 21:12.
[123] 1 Pet. 1:22.
[124] Lk. 1:29.

and one is shaken whenever destiny is touched. Such a word is more than skin

deep:

> For the word of God is living and active; sharper than
> any two-edged sword, and piercing to the division of soul
> and spirit, joints and marrow; and rightly discerning the
> thoughts and intentions of the heart.[125]

We have defined covenant and examined a number of historical/Biblical

models. This chapter has considered the nature of covenantal vows and covenant

counterfeits. We have differentiated between contractual versus covenantal

commitments and posited that, ultimately, all covenant is initiated by the Spirit of

God. Four Biblical benefits of covenant have been considered, and key leader

behaviors derived from them. We have looked at a number of covenanted teams

in Scripture, most of them in the context of missionary itinerancy. To reiterate,

the Biblical model of ministry is that of covenanted teams, whose vision and

purpose is modeled through the life of a redemptive leader, multiplied amongst

team members, and replicated in the spirit of 2 Timothy 2:2, "And what you have

heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to

teach others also."

These covenanted teams clearly model a culture that demonstrates

transformation in the lives of team members. It is that very culture of covenant

that enables team members to be transformed, both individually and collectively.

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[125] Heb. 4:12.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will review significant themes that emerge from current writing in the fields of culture and covenant.

Culture is perhaps the most significant and defining ambience of any group. Lovett Weems has used the following analogy; "Culture is to vision what a movie is to the script."[126] Harrison and Stokes posit another analogy; "Culture is to an organization what personality is to an individual."[127] The seminal work on culture as it relates to organizations is the text by Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership.*[128] For the purposes of this study, our definition of culture is taken from this text:

> …a pattern of basic assumptions–invented, discovered or devel-
> oped by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of
> eternal adaptation and internal integration–that has worked well
> enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new
> members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation
> to these problems.[129]

This definition of culture assumes an inherent process of change in the group as they corporately work through both internal and external issues, weeding out approaches that do not work, and validating those that do. The group then models culture to incoming group members. This definition is important in that Schein sees the culture of any group as organic, able to grow and change. This understanding of culture lends itself well to covenantal, as opposed to contractual,

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[126] Lovett H. Weems, *Church Leadership: Vision, Team, Culture and Integrity* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 100.
[127] Roger Harrison and Herb Stokes, *Diagnosing Organizational Culture* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeffer, 1992), 13.
[128] Schein, *Organizational Culture,* 2004.
[129] Ibid., 9.

commitments amongst group members. The definition also relies heavily on the concept of mentoring newcomers, the primary vehicle in group training, for the purposes of this study.

Although all organizations have a culture, they do not all have a culture of covenant. Task or product-driven organizations whose primary goal is the bottom line may be more committed to the institution than to individuals. Redemptive leaders will be as concerned with the team members as they are with the ministry functioning effectively. This quality of genuine interest in team members is not found in all organizations.

A second significant theme emerging from Schein's work is the pairing of the role of the leader and the influence of culture. Indeed, Schein states that, "The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture."[130] The influence of leadership is particularly obvious in the earliest stages, which Schein calls Birth and Early Growth.[131] This stage is dominated by the personality and belief system of the founder, and is the stage of culture development that will be employed in our study. Schein goes on to posit four basic organizational archetypes, making reference to the personal styles group members may tend to operate out of. The four archetypes are: (1) Bureaucratic [sensing/thinking]; (2) Matrix R+D [intuitive/thinking]; (3) Familial [sensing/feeling]; and (4) Organic/Adaptive [intuitive/feeling].[132] Although some level of covenantal culture may be seen in all four stages, the archetype most

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[130] Ibid., 2.
[131] Ibid., 271.
[132] Ibid., 159. See Appendix 2.

conducive to cultivating covenant would be the Familial. This is because that paradigm most closely resembles the covenantal teams in Scripture. As the founder of the group under study, the author has consciously modeled the familial archetype. The significance of the family paradigm is key in early group learning. Schein states that:

> Some of that learning will be based on the assumptions of the founders and the interaction between the founders' unconscious playing out of his parental feelings and the group's unconscious playing out of its childhood feelings with respect to the founder as a symbolic parent figure.[133]

The conscious and unconscious modeling of the familial archetype overlaps the concept of mentoring and covenantal commitment amongst group members. We see the Familial archetype modeled in the mentoring paradigms of Paul and Timothy as well as Naomi and Ruth. In conclusion, Schein's work is a compendium of studies on the stages of culture development, as well as the strategic importance of leadership.

In the past two decades, our culture has experienced the decentralization of structures and significant democratization of previously top-down institutions such as governments, militaries, technology, agriculture, businesses and industry. The contemporary work of James Rutz provides a historical and sociological guide to the phenomenon, evangelizing for the house church movement, documenting numerous resurrections and promoting world evangelism.[134] The open fellowships encompassed in the "simple church" movement may meet in homes, offices, coffee shops, schools, or wherever. Rutz cites several key

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[133] Ibid., 179.

[134] James H. Rutz, *Megashift: Igniting Spiritual Power* (Colorado Springs: Empowerment Press, 2005).

components of the advantages, including team life, that form deep, loving relationships, mutual prayer, and encouragement. These lead to the shedding of even deep-seated problems, an increase in both freedom and responsibility that leads to empowerment, and a freedom in worship that releases the Holy Spirit to direct things. Rutz exhorts "simple church" participants to prepare both heart and mind, as there is a "huge difference between 'coming to get fed' and 'coming to take part'."[135] The "simple church" movement shares many of the same core values as the purpose of our study in creating a culture of covenant amongst team members.

Even if they do not morph into organic house churches, local congregations are moving away from rigid institutional forms to more fluid, networked groups. Catholic theologian Edward Schillebeeckx has pointed out that the Pauline communities of the early church were,

> …a complex, fluid network of local and more than local structures
> and authorities. All together the order the *ecclesiae* although
> there were really no official titles connected with leadership or
> authority. All this grew out of a pneumatic vitality and prophetic
> power of the Spirit.[136]

In the mid-1970s a great deal of literature was published to assist the institutional church in the interpersonal and team-building skills and strategies so clearly needed.[137] More recently, the intentional move to teams has been described as, "congregations are moving from committee-based, status quo organizations to team-based ministry, from leadership that is primarily concerned with task

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[135] James H. Rutz, *The Open Church* (Auburn: The Seed Sowers, 1992), 169.
[136] Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church With a Human Face* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1988), 59.
[137] For a significant listing, see Jerry W. Brown, *Church Staff Teams That Win* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1979), 32.

accomplishment to leadership that develops its people as well as pursues its vision."[138] Distinctions are needed concerning the nature of a team, as opposed to a work-group or committee. Each has its own specific purpose and function. Researcher George Barna provides some clarifying definitions as follows:

> *Work groups* are collections of people who come together for a particular duration to accomplish a specific task. A *committee* is a collection of individuals who meet for discussion and, perhaps, to make recommendations regarding policy, programs or plans. Committees typically have little, if any, authority to act.[139]

The ongoing relational nature of a true team is what sets it apart from institutional or exclusively task-driven groups. In a real team, the nurture of relationships is vital. As Douglas Webster has pointed out, "God designed us in such a way that the measure of our communion with Him is reflected in the depth of our relationships with others."[140] The team leader would be modeling a consciously redemptive style, always mindful of the concerns and needs of colleagues, and looking to empower and release them into ministry. Ministry toward the team itself is actually facilitating the corporate outreach. Steve Macchia describes this type of leader, saying, "A redemptive understanding of leadership keeps the leader's eyes wide open for opportunities to serve team members and those to whom the team is called."[141] Macchia goes on to posit that redemptive and transformative team leaders evidence five traits. These leaders are *called*,

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[138] E. Stanley Ott, *Transform Your Church With Ministry Teams* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 1.

[139] George Barna, *Building Effective Lay Leadership Teams* (Ventura: Issachar Resources, 2001), 24.

[140] Douglas D. Webster, *Soulcraft: How God Shapes Us Through Relationships* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 71.

[141] Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Team: Five Traits of Vital Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 160.

commissioned, compassionate, capable and *committed*.[142]   The team itself

ministers out of five more vital aspects of a healthy team culture: *trust,*

empowerment, assimilation, management and *service*.[143]   The relational nature of

redemptive team ministry is taken into the arena of covenantal commitment by

author George Cladis.   Citing the covenantal nature of the triune God, Cladis

posits that covenant with one another is a key in establishing community.   He then

goes on to define ministry teams as follows: "Ministry teams are communities that

covenant to be in fellowship together and live out the love of God."[144] In this

context, the team leader is viewed as the chief servant of a team of colleagues:

"The team leader is not conceived of as a sovereign over subjects but as an equal

child of God whose function is to lead through service and the building of

covenantal ministry teams."[145]   There appears to be considerable disagreement as

to whether or not covenants need to be in writing.[146] Verbal or written, the family

of God clearly needs to embrace covenantal vision, commitment, and unity, first

to the Lord, and then to one another.   Cladis summarizes the needed paradigm

shift toward covenant by saying, "Churches must change their views of

organization, moving away from bureaucratic, highly mechanized models, and

must embrace a more biblically and theologically sound model that is more

relational and dynamic."[147] Even secular business leaders are writing concerning

the importance of organizational cultures that are less rigid and increasingly team-

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[142] Ibid.,

[143] Ibid., 33.

[144] George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 10.

[145] Ibid., 37.

[146] For several different opinions, see Ibid., 39-40.

[147] Ibid., 149.

based. Corporate coach, James B. Miller, posits the following acrostic for T.E.A.M.W.O.R.K., "Together, Empathy, Assist, Maturity, Willingness, Organization, Respect and Kindness."[148] Harold Johnson goes on to clearly define the difference between a small group and a team; "A small group is not necessarily a team. Until there is real cohesiveness and mutual commitment, it remains a small group."[149] Johnson seeks team members with a S.I.L.E.C.T. strategy, "Support, Initiation, Loyalty, Empathy, Commitment, Trust."[150] The characteristic that helps create a cohesive corporate culture around the same vision and purpose is referred to as *organizational alignment*. When an organization is experiencing alignment in its culture, each individual expands his own individual purpose to include the purpose of the organization.[151]

The corporate commitment and vision toward a common purpose figures into Jon Katzenbach's definition of a *real* team as, "a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable."[152] Katzenbach goes on to highlight the mutual sharing or shifting of the leadership role in a real team, and commends the benefits of a team approach as follows:

> The collective work of teams can be particularly powerful in situations where the marketplace situation is difficult to predict, where no single member of the leadership group has the answer, and where the performance upside of responding differently is

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[148] James B. Miller, *The Corporate Coach* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1993), 41.
[149] Harold E. Johnson, *Mentoring for Exceptional Performance*, 202.
[150] Ibid.,
[151] For further treatment of alignment see Ibid., 233.
[152] John R. Katzenbach, *Teams at the Top* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1998), 4.

very high.[153]

Business and corporate leaders further acknowledge the significance of relationships in the workplace. According to Mayos' research, "The most significant factor affecting organizational productivity was…interpersonal relationships that are developed on the job."[154] Even the field of medicine extols the positive benefits of personal relationships. Research by Dean Ornish concludes, "When you feel loved, nurtured, cared for, supported, and intimate, you are much more likely to be happier and healthier. You have a much lower risk of getting sick and, if you do, a much greater chance of surviving."[155] Ornish goes on to share that if you have no one to turn to in time of need, "you may have three to five times higher risk of premature death and disease from all causes."[156]

Business professionals also recognize that truly cohesive, effective teams are lead by team leaders who are able to model vulnerability. In the words of Kouzes and Posner, "If leaders want the higher levels of performance that come with trust and collaboration, then they must demonstrate trust *in* others before asking for trust *from* others. When it comes to trust, leaders ante up first."[157] Clearly the corporate world, medical field, and numerous secular researchers on themes related to organizational culture are increasingly embracing collaborative, as opposed to hierarchical, structures. Even in secular organizations, cultures are

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[153] Ibid., 130. This is especially applicable to Coastlands teams, as these are the very types of situations we face in itinerancy.

[154] Bill Thrall and Bruce McNicol, *The Ascent of a Leader* (Phoenix: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 44.

[155] Dean Ornish, M.D., *Love and Survival: The Scientific Basis for the Healing Power of Love and Intimacy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 23, 28.

[156] Ibid.

[157] As quoted in James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Encouraging the Heart* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 85-86.

morphing significantly, becoming less institutionally, and more relationally, based.

Roger Harrison and Herb Stokes have organized the dizzying array of potential types of organizational cultures into four basic styles. The four cultures are power, role, achievement and support.[158] Every organization has some combination of these, each based on different values, and resulting in different behaviors. Each culture has four unique markers that fashion its essential DNA: (1) decision making; (2) motivation; (3) management style; and (4) values and beliefs about work and human nature.

Our consideration of literature concerning the nature of covenant begins with the work of Jeffrey Niehaus. Niehaus posits that the Lord appeared in theophanic glory as part of His covenant administration primarily in four ways: (1) to initiate a covenant (i.e. Abraham); (2) to instruct, encourage, or correct his covenant vassal (i.e. Joshua); (3) to commission or encourage a prophet in covenant lawsuit (i.e. Adam and Eve; Elijah); and (4) to bring covenantal judgement on rebellious vassals.[159] So significant were the covenantal promises that the Lord God would appear in person to confirm and enforce them. Ultimately, the promises of God to His covenant people could accurately be said to be the central theme of both the Old and New Testaments. Israel became a sacral confederation following, in large part, the pattern of international suzerainty treaties, which date back to texts of the Second millenium B.C.[160]

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[158] Harrison and Stokes, *Diagnosing*, 13.
[159] Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *God at Sinai* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 109.

Clearly, the primary way God deals with His people is in covenantal commitment. For hundreds of years, Israel, Assyria, and Middle Eastern cultures embraced treaties based initially on covenant models. The historical significance of covenant in the Old Testament cannot be overstated.

Author and scholar F.F. Bruce carries forward the covenant theme into the New Testament, stating that, "The covenant with Abraham is fulfilled in God's raising up Jesus and sending Him as Savior to Abraham's descendants."[161] Bruce goes on to compare/contrast the Mosaic covenant with the New covenant, citing the heart change as follows from Scripture:

> You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the Living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.[162]

Bruce also cites the Exodus motif in the New Testament, making the parallel with Moses and Jesus as follows: "We see Jesus with his face set towards Jerusalem, leading an uncomprehending and reluctant company of followers who were to be the new Israel, carried with him through the waters of death, baptized with his baptism."[163] Essentially, Bruce posits that the covenantal themes, images, and motifs of the Old Testament are fulfilled in the coming of Jesus.

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[160] The Assyrian treaties went on to emphasize curses as opposed to blessings, and were based increasingly on threats and force. For further treatment, see John Bright, *Covenant and Promise* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976), 40.

[161] F.F. Bruce, *This is That: The New Testament Development of Some Old Testament Themes* (Great Britain: The Paternoster Press, 1968), 52.

[162] 2 Cor., 3:2-3.

[163] Bruce, *This Is That*, 32. Here Bruce is quoting S.H. Hooke, *Alpha and Omega* (London, 1961), 181.

Author John H. Walton has posited a "Revelatory" view of the covenants.[164] Walton believes that covenant is formulated along the lines of ancient treaties, redemptive in nature and ultimately soteric, it is essentially revelatory. Walton states, "The covenant is a revelatory program that operates by means of phases of election that are designed to highlight the nature and attributes of God."[165] The most interesting idea developed by Walton is the motif of "covenant jeopardy", the ongoing progression of covenantal promises followed by significant and recurring stumbling bocks. Walton uses the covenant promise to Abraham[166] as an example, stating, "From Sarah's barrenness to the wife-sister accounts, from competing heirs to the near loss of the promised heir, from sibling rivalry to leaving the land, the patriarchal narratives are driven by covenant jeopardy."[167]

This motif may take several forms. The first is *benefit jeopardy*. If God's covenant people are not cooperative, they obtain no benefit from the covenant (i.e. Leviticus 26:14-30). A second form is *abortive jeopardy*. This motif is in effect when the human party fails to enter into the covenant at all, thus aborting it before it even begins (i.e. if Abraham had not gone to the land God would show him). A third area of jeopardy may occur when the covenantal promise is simply impossible (i.e. Abraham and Sarah's childlessness) and supernatural intervention must occur to secure the covenant. This is called *circumstantial jeopardy*.

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[164] John H. Walton, *Covenant: God's Purpose, God's Plan* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994). For a comparison of Theological Systems including Covenant Theology, Classical Dispensationalism, Progressive Dispensationalism and Walton's "Revelatory" View, see pages 102-183.
[165] Ibid., 79.
[166] Genesis 12-22
[167] Walton, *Covenant*, 99.

Finally, when humans fail to cooperate, God chooses alternate means of fulfilling His covenant, often at the expense of the uncooperative party. This is called *revelation jeopardy*. Von Rad refers to a pattern of covenant jeopardy in similar fashion concerning the promise to Abraham:

> The assuring, divine words of promise are repeated, but then fulfillment seems to recede in a puzzling way before what is striding across the future; and when the heir to this whole promise is finally born, God orders Abraham himself to sacrifice him on Mt. Moriah.[168]

The motif of covenant jeopardy continues into the New Testament with the considerable effort by Herod to find and destroy the king of the Jews.[169] Every significant challenge and threat to the competition of Jesus' earthly ministry, including His death on the cross, could be considered covenant jeopardy.[170]

Just as the Lord moves in covenantal commitment toward His people, He desires that His people move covenantally toward one another.[171] The work of Ray S. Anderson provides understanding in the outworking of intentional, practical theology as it is lived out in the world. Anderson calls this practical theology *Christopraxis*. *Christopraxis* is "the normative and authoritative grounding of all theological reflection in the divine act of God consummated in Jesus Christ and continued through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ."[172] The practice of *Christopraxis* is not merely a theological understanding or ministry style. Anderson posits that ministry toward others

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[168] Gerhard von Rad, *God At Work In Israel* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 89.
[169] Mt. 2:1-18.
[170] At one point, the Jews attempted to stone Him. See Jn. 8:58-59.
[171] Jn. 15:12.
[172] Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 53.

"becomes the embodiment of a life of community and wholeness that is derived from God himself through Christ."[173]

This understanding of the need for impartation, in addition to information comes from the healing power and presence of the Holy Spirit–through not only doing, but being, and not only speaking, but behaving, in accordance with the purposes of God. *Christopraxis* quickens a growth process in personal encounters described by Anderson as an "agogic moment." In this encounter, an individual is confronted with the Word and Spirit of God by an intermediary, acting as a catalyst for the release of information/impartation, resulting in change and growth in the person being ministered to. Anderson provides the following example:

> A biblical example of this agogic moment can be found in Nathan's
> confrontation with David following his adultery with Bathsheba and
> the murder of her husband (2 Sam 12). Nathan acts as an intermediary,
> a motive power is release [sic] in David's heart resulting in change,
> and the effect is produced as indicated in Psalm 51.[174]

Anderson goes on to state that the paracletic ministry of Christ through the believer actually incorporates the individual into the body of Christ. Indeed, our self-identity is in part derived from our corporate identity. The covenant of circumcision given to Abraham sealed the identity of God's people. As Anderson explains, "Circumcision, like the Christian ritual of baptism, is not performed on oneself; it is performed by significant others who represent the community or 'body' that gives the person primary identity."[175] Here we see the enduring significance of identity as a covenant people of God, within a community of faith. Initial confession of faith in Jesus Christ means excommunication from family,

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[173] Ibid., 54.
[174] Ibid., 198.
[175] Ibid., 247.

even mock burial, in some cultures. Baptism into a community was therefore a praxis, confirming the new sense of family, and confirming a culture of covenant. This experience of *Christopraxis* and incorporation of the individual into the body of Christ via the covenantal commitment of leaders and team members is exactly what redemptive leaders want to do.

Anderson ends his text on practical theology with a call to incarnational, as opposed to institutional, ministry. He compares/contrasts the two paradigms: the first as an institutional embodiment of Christ, and the second following the trajectory of Pentecost as a model for the mission and ministry of the church.[176] Anderson refers to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (incarnational ministry) as, "lived transcendence".[177] As individual believers live genuine lives of transcendence, the church at large becomes increasingly incarnational.[178]

Communities of individual believers, living transcendent lives by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, minister incarnationally both within the community of faith and as a testimony in the world. Western culture, with its emphasis on rugged individualism, has not valued corporate identity. The identity of God's covenant people is inextricably rooted in community. As von Rad has pointed out,

> In olden days the worshipper regarded himself as an individual
> to a much less extent than we do. He knew himself entirely as a
> member of a collective body, and in religious matters he could

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[176] For further treatment of these trajectories see Ibid., 318.

[177] Ray S. Anderson, *Historical Transcendence and the Reality of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1975), 229.

[178] For more on Incarnational Ministry, see Ray S. Anderson, *Theological Foundations for Ministry* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 577.

only be moved and filled by the experience of the totality of the worshipping community.[179]

Numerous authors have considered the idea of a covenant people of God fleshed out in community. Louis H. Evans encourages churches to create formal covenant groups, which would meet regularly. Those groups would intentionally commit to and practice affirmation, availability, prayer, openness, honesty, sensitivity, confidentiality and accountability.[180] Consciously forming covenant groups based on geographic location, alphabetical order, or some other criteria for grouping seems to work against the Biblical model this writer notes in Scripture. Here, there was a conscious formation of a covenant group in team ministry, but only after corporate worship and fasting.[181]

Another, more formal, understanding of the potential formation of covenant communities can be found in the significant text on corporate and interpersonal covenants, *Covenant Relationships*, by Keith Intrater.[182] In this very complete work on the nature, variety, and outworking of covenants, the author considers broadly inclusive covenants such as tribal; governmental and social; familial and congregational; and teamwork and personal friendship covenants. As the pastor of a Messianic Jewish congregation, Intrater emphasizes the covenantal and communal nature of God's work for, in, and amongst His people. Intrater's insistence on covenantal commitment amongst team members is of special interest to this study. He states that, "All spiritual action comes out of

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[179] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:105.
[180] For further treatment of Covenant Groups see Louis H. Evans, Jr., *Covenant to Care* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1982).
[181] Acts 13:1-3.
[182] Keith Intrater, *Covenant Relationships* (Shippensburg: Destiny Image Publishers, 1989).

relationship."[183]   The centrality of relationship and the outworking of ministry, resulting from a common vision and purpose in God, is the goal of this thesis relative to a culture of covenant. This is a primary goal of redemptive leaders.

The theme of personal loyalty in a context of commitment is also important to our study.   Author Bob Sorge defines loyalty as, "a noble, unswerving allegiance, rooted in faith and love, that binds hearts together in common purpose."[184] Sorge makes a differentiation between Judas' betrayal and Peter's denial based on where loyalty broke down saying, "Peter's disloyalty was rooted in a loss of faith; Judas' disloyalty was rooted in a loss of love."[185] That betrayal, ultimately rooted in a loss of love, goes right to the heart of covenantal commitment. Redemptive leaders endeavoring to model a culture of covenant amongst those they serve must remain faithful to their covenantal commitment team members even when they are betrayed. One cannot genuinely enter into covenant relationships without risking betrayal. Sorge exhorts his readers to fly solo, to trust no one; this is the only way to avoid the risk of betrayal.[186] Flying solo is neither Biblical, nor covenantal, nor conducive to mentoring teams in ministry.

In a similar vein, Margaret Farley speaks to the inevitable disappointments and disillusionment in committed relationships, especially after the initial honeymoon period is over.[187] Just as Sorge contrasted two different types of

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[183] Ibid., 99.
[184] Bob Sorge, *Loyalty: The Reach of the Noble Heart* (Greenwood: Oasis House, 2004), 15.
[185] Ibid., 177.
[186] Ibid., 161.
[187] Margaret A. Farley, *Personal Commitments* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1986), 5.

disloyalty, Farley makes a distinction between being constant versus being faithful; to be constant is to "perform the promised deeds of love with a kind of inert conformity to the letter of the law of the commitment. To be faithful is to perform the deeds of love in a way which I am present in them."[188] Farley goes on to posit six key insights relative to personal commitment that are informed by covenant as follows:

> God has made an unconditional commitment of unconditional love to human persons.
> I. God's promise is addressed to human persons in a way that takes account of their reality as persons and that thereby calls for and makes possible a responding personal and communal commitment.
> II. God is faithful to this promise.
> III. God's word relativizes [sic] every framework of human commitment.
> IV. God's commitment makes possible the breaking of other- wise insurmountable barriers within and between persons, so that they can commit themselves to one another in some form of faithful love.
> V. God's promise is given to persons *in via*, while they are not yet capable of perfect fidelity.[189]

Because the Lord Himself modeled faithfulness in His covenantal commitment to the Father and to His people, we have His living example in the gospels. Since He has given us the Holy Spirit, we also may, by His grace, be truly present and faithful in our covenant toward one another.

This literature review has given us a working definition of culture, described its significance in organizations, and cited the role of the leader in culture formation and development. Four archetypes of culture were considered, the Familial stage bearing the greatest resemblance to the mentored ministry of itinerating teams we see in Scripture. We looked at the current cultural trend

[188] Ibid., 46.
[189] Ibid., 113.

toward relationally based organizations of all types: businesses, industry, education, and the growing organic Church movement. We considered several healthy team ministry matrixes, and Walton's motif of covenant jeopardy. Anderson's *Christopraxis* and the need to transition to increasingly incarnational ministry, as well as the necessity of community and identification of the individual within the body of Christ were considered. Finally, the challenges of personal loyalty, including the risk of betrayal and potential for relational disappointment, were discussed.

Having identified significant works and key themes from literature, this thesis will turn to the project design at hand.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROJECT DESIGN

We have noted in Chapter One that information does not necessarily lead to transformation. Without the connection of genuine relationships along with good information, a commitment to change is slim. This thesis has looked at both theological and literary models to move from institutionally based to relationally based ministry. Redemptive ministries are relational to the core. Key leaders need to model relationally based ministry effectively.

The intent of this project is to develop a framework that creates a community whereby the heart, and subsequent actions, of the leader create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop for the purpose of transformation. We will explore the following key questions:

- What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

- Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

- How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

- What are the evidences of transformation?

Current assumptions are:

- People are incapable of covenant relationships apart from the grace of God.

- Via the redemptive process, people can grow/morph into covenant relationships for the purpose of transformation.

The particular focus of this project will be the itinerating ministry of Coastlands Consultants, of which the author is founder. The ministry setting will be concentrated on teams of two to eight people as they travel across the Northeast and Eastern seaboard providing on-site mentoring in a variety of Christian venues including Spiritual Emphasis Week, retreats, women's ministries, leadership training, Vacation Bible School, camp ministry, and teacher ministry.

This project will demonstrate that the call of the redemptive leader is to create a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation. Using a qualitative research design, we will conduct evaluative research resulting in formative evaluation, in order to answer the question, "How can we move toward the preferred culture?" The author's hypothesis is that key leader behaviors model a culture of covenant. These behaviors will be defined and prepared as a survey pre-test amongst Coastlands Executive Team members. Key strategic interventions based on leader weaknesses will be practiced, after which a second survey post-test will be administered.[190] The time between the two surveys will be ten weeks.

The pre and post-test surveys will consist of a forced answer multiple choice instrument, based upon four lines of inquiry: (1) key leader behaviors; (2) culture; (3) covenant; and (4) teams. Respondents will select from a Likert scale of four choices: (1) Never; (2) Occasionally; (3) Often; and (4) Always. Thirty questions will be asked of five Executive Team members, and written comments

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[190] See Appendix 2 for the "Coastlands Consultants Executive Team Survey", from which the pre- and post-test surveys were administered.

will be requested. The four lines of inquiry represented in the surveys were selected to test the hypothesis that key leader behaviors set the tone, and lay the groundwork, for culture which is intentionally convenantal; and that these behaviors can be seen in ministering teams. The thirty questions define specific behaviors one would expect to see in lines of inquiry. The pre-test survey is intended to discover current weaknesses, and develop strategies to improve.

Participation in this study was limited to Coastlands Executive Team members, numbering five. This project relies on a small number of individuals, who were selected because of their significant and ongoing commitment to, and involvement in, the ministry, as well as their covenantal relationship with the author. As very pointed, specific, and often personal questions are dealt with, the names of participants have been replaced by monikers. These monikers were chosen to reveal something of their relationship to the author, while not revealing too much of their identity. The monikers are: Fun Friend (F.F.); True Colleague (T.C.); Generation Next (G.N.); Loyal Pal (L.P.); and Old Faithful (O.F.). Although a small "n", this is a purposeful sampling in which "participants know the information required, are willing to reflect on the phenomena of interest, have the time, and are willing to participate."[191]

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[191] Janice M. Morse and Lyn Richards, *Readme First: for a users' guide to Qualitative Methods* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002), 173.

Pre-Test Survey Results

n = 5

KEY LEADER BEHAVIORS			
(1) The key leader seeks and implements the advice of others.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	4	
"Pam asks for input regularly. Laymen often have difficulty offering suggestions to their leaders. It is necessary to work with people for a time before the trust/relationship is built to freely offer such insights." (F.F.)			
(2) The key leader models good communication skills.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	2	2	1
"…often taking notes and clarifying information." (F.F.) "…listening but not always hearing, seemingly due to misunderstanding the person's point due to personal expectations of what the person means or is implying." (G.N.)			
(3) The key leader can be trusted to look out for my welfare.			
Never	Occasionally Often to her sacrifice	Often	Always
		3	2
"Soda cans in Laconia!" [Note] (G.N.)			
(4) The key leader acts as a networking catalyst, releasing others into ministry.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	2	2

[Note] This team member is referring to an incident that occurred at the home of a host family in Laconia, New Hampshire. This individual was attempting to retrieve a soda from a very tall hutch when, suddenly, the entire supply of stacked, full soda cans began to fall down on my team member. Without even thinking, I ran over and shielded this individual from the cascade of cans with my body. This incident is now affectionately referred to as the "rain of Coke."

"She is a pioneer, her heart is to release others, but she shies away from being a networking catalyst in not wanting to be seen as self-promoting." (F.F.)

(5) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming a better listener.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	3	1

"Pam is a doer/fixer. Because of her experience she easily pinpoints the real problem and wants to move on to the fix." (F.F.)

(6) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	3	2	

"Sometimes attempts to 'take things into her own hands' to force something to happen." (G.N.)

(7) I experience the leader as safe when I approach her with a problem.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

"Related to #2" (G.N.)

(8) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more transparent.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	2	2

"Pam is coming to grips with some of her own issues and sifting those things through why/how she conducts Coastlands." (F.F.)

(9) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more adept in her mentoring skills.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	2	3	

"…even as the founder/leader, to be mentored herself." (F.F.)

Use the space below for other comments on key leadership behaviors.

"The key leader is *extremely* patient with her team members. She has difficulty waiting on the Lord for direction and answers." (O.F.)

"I see the key leader desiring to improve and working diligently on those behaviors that I marked and perceive as "Occasionally". I believe that human relationships and communication skills are difficult at best. I see that the key leader is striving to allow the Lord to mediate and give her discernment in her relationships with team members." (L.P.)

CULTURE			
(10) I see a common vision and purpose in the Coastlands teams.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	2	2
"The forming of a board should help in getting this clear vision and purpose out to the public." (F.F.)			
(11) Coastlands teams communicate freely with one another.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	4	
"Related to #2 and #7" (G.N.)			
(12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	
1	2	2	
"Fail in a ministry venue? Yes. If people are unable to continue in Coastlands, however, releasing them is easier said than done." (G.N.) "Due to the small size of the team there may be a hesitancy to step out of one's comfort zone/try new things." (F.F.)			
(13) Coastlands teams are considerate of others.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always

	1	2	2

(14) Coastlands teams model a culture that is Biblically based.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	1	3

(15) It seems like the people on Coastlands teams have always worked together.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	2	3	

"Although everyone is very helpful and eager to do what needs to be done it will take some time to see who has the gift/talents for different areas within the ministry." (F.F.)

(16) Coastlands teams are able to effectively minister in the cultures they serve.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	1	3

"Any ineffectiveness not is necessarily due to team members." (G.N.)

"This goes hand in hand with the freedom to fail and the few numbers of team members. As we grow and get a central location this should beomce a mute [sic] issue." (F.F.)

Use the space below for other comments on culture.

"I'm not certain that it is safe to fail as a team member. The key leader requires a very high standard and sometimes members cannot measure up to that standard – trying to exhausts them. Failure is worrisome to the key leader as well. It is seldom far from her thoughts." (O.F.)

"I see that the key leader has high expectations of herself and team members. This can at times be intimidating, but as a whole the team "comes through" in the ministry venues. Team members work well together led by the degree of excellence the key leader models." (L.P.)

COVENANT			
(17) I see evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 3	Always 1
"The willingness is observable but the distance between homes makes this less practical." (F.F.)			
(18) Coastlands teams treat one another with mutual respect.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 1	Always 3
(19) Coastlands teams maintain coaching contact after leaving the "on site" portion of their ministry.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 3	Always 1
"This is a difficult one. Being "friendly" and "reaching out into relationships" are two different things. How does one build relationships when they travel so much? How do you build these relationships without being perceived as self-promoting since so many of the people we come into contact with are through Coastlands? [Team member] seems to be very good at this." (F.F.)			
(20) I see evidence of loyalty and committed love among team members.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 2	Always 2
"The very nature of Coastlands, at present, is transit, temporal. The tendency to look at the physical/time involvement in Coastlands can frustrate the knowledge of loyalty/committed love." (F.F.) "The fact that you and [former team member] are even continuing to communicate is evidence of this." (G.N.)			

(21) I see evidence that team members have been drawn together by God's Spirit.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 2	Always 2
"Have to be in a ministry like this." (G.N.)			
(22) I see team members asking one another for help.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 4	Always
"The board is a big part to this." (F.F.)			
(23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another, in Coastlands teams.			
Never	Occasionally 2	Often 2	Always 1
"..A central location; giving more opportunity for sharpening in a familiar place with resources available. As the teams grow to be able to get together and share what each team is doing/learning." (F.F.)			
Use the space below for other comments on covenant.			
"Usually when team members join Coastlands they have witnessed the key leader's excellence by way of workshops, retreats or spiritual emphasis weeks. They respect her and they respect each other, as a result." (O.F.) "I see a 'fellowship' among team members. I believe that because all team members are Christian brothers and sisters there is definitely a connect in the Spirit. There is a desire, in their relationship to one another and a common vision for the ministry, to be part of something bigger than themselves. It takes work, though, and each member should feel as equally valued as others." (L.P.)			

TEAMS			
(24) Team members are committed to helping each other on the field.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1		4
(25) Teams are versatile, able to make last-minute changes.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	3	1
"As we see more team members this will be a wonderful asset." (F.F.)			
(26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	3	1	1
"New ones are greatly encouraged, old ones still cut deep. No amount of intellectual understanding as to why one is moving on lessens the loss. One can only hope as we grow this will be easier to absorb and happen less often." (F.F.) "Allowing new members to come on? Yes. Old ones to move on? Easier said than done." (G.N.)			
"Frankly, the key leader has difficulty releasing team members who have had <u>major</u> roles in the ministry. Coastlands is a demanding ministry and many who have 'come aboard' cannot maintain that high level of performance and, in many cases, the inconveniences of being 'on the road'. (When I worked a week in Burlington, I came home and took an afternoon nap each day!)" (O.F.)			
(27) Team members operate in the spirit of Romans 12:10, "Outdo one another in showing honor."			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	2	2

"Ministry leader sets excellent example." (G.N.)			
(28) Although team members change, the quality of ministry remains highly effective.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	1	3
"At the cost of the team members' physical well being?" (F.F.)			
(29) When one team member is overwhelmed, the others step in, even without being asked.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	4	
"…Communication and openness among members to say 'I can't go on'. Members need to know that at any time they can call or may be called to step in. A willingness to make this sacrifice by all members would go a long way in building Coastlands." (F.F.)			
(30) It would be fun to be on a Coastlands team.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		2	3
"Another Coastlands adventure!" (G.N.)			
Use the space below for other comments on teams.			
"Coastlands is a very effective ministry in its venues. In the venues team members, because of the modeling of the key leader, serve fully those they are ministering to and enjoy working with one another. There is so much fulfillment and fruit from the ministry." (L.P.) "This is very difficult to do being that I do not work with you on a regular basis. To respond with an 'Always' seemed to say I knew you better than I do. 'Often' would have to be something that I have had opportunity to observe. 'Occasionally' seems to fit with the amount of time/work I have been able to do with you. It also gives me some were [sic] to go in future surveys!" (F.F.)			

Results of Survey Pre-Test

The determination of survey pre-test strengths and weaknesses is based on how well, according to respondents, the four Biblical benefits of covenant were modeled, given the three key questions of the thesis:

- What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

- Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

- How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

- What are the evidences of transformation?

The hypothesis contends that the heart, and subsequent actions, of the leader create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop. As illustrated in the "Matrix of Key Questions and Biblical Benefits" on the following page, covenantal behavior is ultimately modeled by the senior leader, becomes part of the culture, and is disseminated to teams. As Howard Hendricks once said, "Human personality is the vehicle of effective teaching."[192] As itinerant missionaries, Coastlands teams are always living out their values in the contexts they minister in, creating a sort of axiological theater. In the context of qualitative research, Swinton and Mowat define practical theology as, "seek[ing] to explore the implications of the proposition that faith is a performative [sic] and embodied act; that the gospel is not simply something to be believed, but also something to

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[192] Howard G. Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1987), 29.

be lived. Human experience is a 'place' where the gospel is grounded, embodied,

interpreted and lived out."[193]

MATRIX OF KEY QUESTIONS AND BIBLICAL BENEFITS				
Four Biblical Benefits of Covenant				
Key Questions	**(1) Models the unconditional *agape* love of God**	**(2) Provides a context for developing vulnerability and trust**	**(2) Makes it safe to fail**	**(4) Secures the relationship**
(1) What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?	(3) trusted to look out for my welfare. (6) becoming more patient	(1) seeks/ implements advice (2) good communication skills (7) safe to go to (8) becoming more transparent	(4) catalyst, releasing others (9) becoming more adept/ skills	(5) better listener
(2) Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?	(13) considerate of others (15) seems they have always worked together (24) committed to helping each other on the field	(22) asking one another for help (29) team members step in, even without being asked	(10) common vision and purpose (12) safe to fail (16) effectively minister in the cultures they serve (28) quality of ministry highly	

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[193] John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Canterbury Press Ltd., 2006), 5.

			effective	
	(25) versatile, able to make last-minute changes			
(3) How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?	(14) models a culture of that is Biblically based (18) treat one another with mutual respect (21) drawn together by God's Spirit (27) showing mutual honor	(11) teams communicate freely (23) ability to learn from one another (26) teams are open, allowing new members, releasing old members (30) it is fun to be on a Coastlands team!		(17) evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members (19) maintain contact after leaving the "on site" portion (20) evidence of loyalty/ committed love among team members

In spite of a small "n", the pre-test survey results indicate a few key areas of perceived weakness in the key leader. I was encouraged by the overwhelmingly positive responses, especially on questions 3, 4, 7, 18, 24, 27, 28 and 30. The growth areas, falling consistently in the "Occasionally" and "Often" categories, and one "Never", fall almost entirely in the areas of listening and communication skills. "Generation Next" points out that I misunderstand a person's point at times "due to personal expectations of what the person means or is implying (see question 2)." "Fun Friend" sees it as a function of being a "doer/fixer", and wanting to "move on to the fix (question 5)." This leads to the tepid responses to the question asking for evidence that I am becoming more

patient, which, ironically, is not happening as quickly as I would like it to. "Old Faithful", having witnessed my struggle to gain in patience for over twenty years, indicates that my issues of impatience are not with team members, but with the Lord. I believe this to be accurate. I appreciate the encouragement from "Loyal Pal" indicating that I am "working diligently" on these behaviors.

Another key area of concern, and in fact the only "Never" response, was on question 12. Both "Generation Next" and "Fun Friend" comment. "Old Faithful" cites the challenge of meeting high standards, along with the very accurate observation that, "Failure is worrisome to the key leader." This insight coincides with the fact that it is indeed very difficult to "release team members who have had major roles (i.e. "Old Faithful"), partly because when they leave we are so desperately strapped for help, and also because when they leave I feel like a failure. "Fun Friend" touches on this in the comment, "Old ones [past team members] still cut deep. No amount of intellectual understanding as to why one is moving on lessens the loss. One can only hope as we grow this will be easier to absorb and happen less often (question 26)."

A final key area commented on several times, is simply the intense and demanding nature of this ministry. As noted by "Fun Friend", "How does one build relationships when they travel so much (question 19)?" "Fun Friend" says that, concerning covenant, "The very nature of Coastlands…is transit, temporal. The tendency to look at the physical/time involvement in Coastlands can frustrate the knowledge of loyalty/committed love (question 20)." "Fun Friend" makes reference to a "central location" twice in comments, saying that having such a

location would "giv[e] more opportunity for sharpening in a familiar place with resources available. As the teams grow to be able to get together and share what each team is doing/learning [sic] (question 23)." The intensity of team itinerancy, ideally, needs to be offset by a ministry base, providing a central location and common resource/meeting area.

In summary, the survey pre-test isolates three areas for strategic intervention, detailed below in the "Matrix of Strategic Interventions": (1) listening/communication skills; (2) issues relative to the loss of team members as well as recruitment; and (3) the need for a central location/ministry base.

MATRIX OF STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS			
Targeted Area	**Survey Question**	**Relevance to Creating a Culture of Covenant**	**Strategic Intervention**
(1) Listening/ communication skills	(2) Key leader models good communication skills. (6) Key leader is becoming more patient.	Listening patiently and working on discerning non-verbal cues will open up communication amongst team members.	Leader will read and implement strategies from the book *Quick-to-Listen Leaders* by Dave Ping and Anne Clippard.
(2) Issues relative to loss of team members/ recruitment	(12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member. (26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.	It needs to be "safe" for people to move on, as well as come aboard. It also needs to be "safe" for the key leader.	Leader will, with Coastlands council assistance, initiate new recruitment endeavors. More team members = less sense of failure each time someone moves on.
(3) Central location/ ministry base	(20) I see evidence of loyalty/ committed love among team	It is difficult to sustain covenantal commitment without meeting at	Leader will, with Coastlands council assistance, begin to seek a central

members. (23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another in Coastlands teams.	least occasionally as team members. Although we do this on the road, it would help to have a Coastlands "place."	location/home base for the ministry.

To address the listening/communication skills area, the author will read and implement strategies from the book, *Quick-to-Listen Leaders* by Dave Ping and Anne Clippard.[194] Concerning issues relative to the difficulties of losing team members, new recruitment strategies will be employed. The author will also begin the process of locating and securing a ministry base. The survey post-test will hopefully confirm pro-active leader change and growth in these three areas.

Post-Test Survey Results

n = 5

COASTLANDS CONSULTANTS EXECUTIVE TEAM SURVEY			
Please select one of the following answers for each of the questions listed below.			
KEY LEADER BEHAVIORS			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
1) The key leader seeks and implements the advice of others.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 5	Always
2) The key leader models good communication skills.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 4	Always 1
3) They key leader can be trusted to look out for my welfare.			

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[194] Dave Ping and Anne Clippard, *Quick-to-Listen Leaders* (Loveland: Equipping Ministries International, 2005).

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		2	3

4) The key leader acts a networking catalyst, releasing others into ministry.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

"Possibly Mullein Hill, for example" (G.N.)

5) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming a better listener.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		4	2

"Conversations at the Hoiems, for example" (G.N.)

6) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		5	

7) I experience the leader as safe when I approach her with a problem.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

8) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more transparent.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

"Coffee can at Upton Lake, for example" (G.N.)

9) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more adept in her mentoring skills.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

Use the space below for other comments on key leadership behaviors.

"Pam has such a great attitude toward others, always encouraging them to step out and give God the opportunity to use them. Releasing others into ministry within Coastlands she is great [sic], but releasing others into ministry in other areas is still a struggle, and rightfully so, in that her first objective is to build Coastlands. Becoming a better listener, more patient, more transparent have been in some ways inevitable; experience, maturity, training [sic]. The evidence of this is her continued burning desire to grow Coastlands, to serve God by teaching others and turning them loose on New England." (F.F.)

"The key leader is willing to publicly admit that she is human and vulnerable."
(O.F.)

"The team leader strives to serve those who minister with her. She is also willing to try suggestions from other team members. In fact she looks for input. She has beomce more transparent in her personal feelings about things. She strives to understand where others are "coming from". (L.P.)

CULTURE			
10) I see a common vision and purpose in Coastlands teams.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always 5
11) Coastlands teams communicate freely with one another.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 3	Always 2
"About Holden, for example" (G.N.)			
12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 2	Always 2
13) Coastlands teams are considerate of others.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always

	1	1	3

14) Coastlands teams model a culture that is Biblically based.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		2	3

"Book of Acts" (G.N.)

15) It seems like the people on Coastlands teams have always worked together.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2

"With G.N. – yes." (O.F.)

16) Coastlands teams are able to effectively minister in the cultures they serve.

Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		1	4

"Manhattan Christian Academy is *not* New England!" (G.N.)

Use the space below for other comments on culture.

"Coastlands always appears to be well prepared and willing to assist in any way within the venues that they serve. Most of the comments I have heard regarding this team are that they seem very comfortable together and work well together."

(F.F.)

"G.N. is always considerate of others. I'm not certain Pam appreciates her volunteers and their time spent with Coastlands. i.e. I have found two chapel speakers for an upcoming SEW and have asked when they are to speak – their lives are very busy and she should respect that and promptly respond." (O.F.)

"Coastlands, as a ministry, is very effective, due in part to the team members' relationships and commitment to the ministry's goals. Team members care about each other and encourage each other." (L.P.)

COVENANT			
17) I see evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 3	Always 2
18) Coastlands teams treat one another with mutual respect.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 1	Always 4
19) Coastlands teams maintain coaching contact after leaving the "on site" portion of their ministry.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 3	Always 1
20) I see evidence of loyalty and committed love among team members.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 3	Always 2
"Falling Cokes!" (G.N.)			
21) I see evidence that team members have been drawn together by God's Spirit.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 2	Always 3
22) I see team members asking one another for help.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 4	Always
23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another, in Coastlands teams.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 3	Always 2
Use the space below for other comments on covenant.			

"There is definitely an underlying covenant among those associated with Coastlands. The continued support and communication through out [sic] the year is evidenced in the ease at which [sic] the team is able to come together at differing venues and work with each other. The need for asking for help is nearly non-existent in that the members are often seen offering help before a request can be made." (F.F.)

"Covenant is difficult at best. Team members strive to understand each other and work out any differing views. Team members try to speak the truth in love. Team members consider others on the team when making decisions. There is a concern as to how others would be affected by decisions." (L.P.)

"G.N. is committed to Coastlands as is Pam, and their commitment to God is evident in the ministry." (O.F.)

TEAMS			
24) Team members are committed to helping each other on the field.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		1	4
25) Teams are versatile, able to make last-minute changes.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		3	2
26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
	1	3	1
27) Team members operate in the spirit of Romans 12:10, "Outdo one another in showing honor."			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always
		1	4

28) Although team members change, the quality of ministry remains highly effective.			
Never	Occasionally	Often	Always 5

29) When one team member is overwhelmed, the others step in, even without being asked.			
Never	Occasionally	Often 4	Always 1

30) It would be fun to be on a Coastlands team.			
Never	Occasionally 1	Often 2	Always 2

Use the space below for other comments on teams.

"The teams are great. I still think there is a struggle in the area of 'releasing old ones to move on'. Although there is no intentional hurt there it still remains."

(F.F.)

"When team members are at a venue their concern and focus on those they minister to is shared. They truly beomce "one in the Spirit" as they minister to those people that God has called them to minister to. They encourage and mentor one another in the ministry." (L.P.)

"That was very evident in New York. G.N. had organized his team to watch over the preschoolers during a workshop for the teachers." (O.F.)

"Another Coastlands adventure!" (G.N.)

Summation: Pre-Test/Post-Test Comparison

Key:

+ Forward mvt.

- Backward mvt.

= Unchanged

COASTLANDS CONSULTANTS EXECUTIVE TEAM SURVEY		
KEY LEADER BEHAVIORS		
Pre-Test	**Post-Test**	**Net Change**
1) The key leader seeks and implements the advice of others.		
1 Occasionally 4 Often	5 Often	+
2) They key leader models good communication skills.		
2 Occasionally 2 Often 1 Always	4 Often 1 Always	+
3) They key leader can be trusted to look out for my welfare.		
3 Often 2 Always	2 Often 3 Always	+
4) The key leader acts as a networking catalyst, releasing others into ministry.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
5) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming a better listener.		

1 Occasionally 3 Often 1 Always	4 Often 1 Always	+
6) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient.		
3 Occasionally 2 Often	5 Often	+
7) I experience the leader as safe when I approach her with a problem.		
3 Often 2 Always	3 Often 2 Always	=
8) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more transparent.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
9) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more adept in her mentoring skills.		
2 Occasionally 3 Often	3 Often 2 Always	+
CULTURE		
10) I see a common vision and purpose in the Coastlands Teams.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	5 Always	+
11) Coastlands teams communicate freely with one another.		

1 Occasionally 4 Often	3 Often 2 Always	+
12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member.		
1 Never 2 Occasionally 2 Often	1 Occasion-ally 2 Often 2 Always	+
13) Coastlands teams are considerate of others.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	1 Occasion-ally 1 Often 3 Always	+
14) Coastlands teams model a culture that is Biblically based.		
1 Occasionally 1 Often 3 Always	2 Often 3 Always	+
15) It seems like the people on Coastlands teams have always worked together.		
2 Occasionally 3 Often	3 Often 2 Always	+
16) Coastlands teams are able to effectively minister in the cultures they serve.		
1 Occasionally 1 Often 3 Always	1 Often 4 Always	+
COVENANT		

17) I see evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members.		
1 Occasionally 3 Often 1 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
18) Coastlands teams treat one another with mutual respect.		
1 Occasionally 1 Often 3 Always	1 Often 4 Always	+
19) Coastlands teams maintain coaching contact after leaving the "on site" portion of their ministry.		
1 Occasionally 3 Often 1 Always	1 Occasion-ally 3 Often 1 Always	=
20) I see evidence of loyalty and committed love among team members.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
21) I see evidence that team members have been drawn together by God's Spirit.		
1 Occasionally 2 Often 3 Always	2 Often 3 Always	+
22) I see team members asking one another for help.		

1 Occasionally 4 Often	1 Occasion-ally 4 Often	=
23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another, in Coastlands teams.		
2 Occasionally 2 Often 1 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
TEAMS		
24) Team members are committed to helping each other on the field.		
1 Occasionally 4 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
25) Teams are versatile, able to make last-minute changes.		
1 Occasionally 3 Often 1 Always	3 Often 2 Always	+
26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.		
3 Occasionally 1 Often 1 Always	1 Occasion-ally 3 Often 1 Always	+
27) Team members operate in the spirit of Romans 12:10, "Outdo one another in showing honor."		

1 Occasionally 2 Often 2 Always	1 Often 4 Always	+
28) Although team members change, the quality of ministry remains highly effective.		
1 Occasionally 1 Often 3 Always	5 Always	+
29) When one team member is overwhelmed, the others step in, even without being asked.		
1 Occasionally 4 Often	4 Often 1 Always	+
30) It would be fun to be on a Coastlands team.		
2 Often 3 Always	1 Occasion-ally 2 Often 2 Always	–

Results of Survey Post-Test

During the two months and four locations/teams between the pre and post-test surveys, several changes have been indicated by the Executive Team, as seen in the Pre-Test/Post-Test Comparison. The responses of Generation Next cite several specific incidents where my listening/communication skills area seems to be improving. "Conversations at the Hoiems (question 5)" is a reference to listening to a series of insights about Coastlands. Generation Next and Loyal Pal have seen an increase in my transparency. All five respondents answered "Often" to the question, "I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient." Generation Next's comment in question 16 ("Coastlands teams are able to

effectively minister in the cultures they serve.") was an indicator that a culture of covenant and effective ministry are evidently cross-cultural. The comment, "Manhattan Christian Academy is *not* New England!" reflects the vast difference between that school's culture and the culture of the majority of schools we minister in. Old Faithful's comment regarding not appreciating volunteers took me by surprise, as I thought we had that schedule all worked out. Even with improvements in communication, I still have glitches!

It was interesting and encouraging to me that Generation Next cited the "falling Cokes" again, this time in the Covenant section (question 20). I was similarly encouraged that Fun Friend sees an, "underlying covenant among those associated with Coastlands." Fun Friend again cites my struggle in releasing old team members to move on. The ongoing need for committed, faithful help makes it difficult to lose people.

Of special interest are the four questions with which all five Executive Team Members were in agreement. They are:

Question 1: "The key leader seeks and implements the advice of others."   5 Often

Question 6: "I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient."   5 Often

Question 10: "I see a common vision and purpose in the Coastlands Teams."   5 Always

Question 28: "Although team members change, the quality of ministry remains highly effective."   5 Always

CHAPTER FIVE

OUTCOMES

In interpreting the results of this study, several initial insights frame my thinking. In modeling relationally based ministry, with an intent to create a culture of covenant, I was focused and intentional in areas of personal and leadership weakness (i.e. listening/communication skills) These approximately two months of accountability resulted in real change and growth, which needs to be maintained. It was possible to isolate, articulate, and improve upon behaviors that create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop. Just creating the thirty questions made me consciously aware of how "covenantal" my attitudes and actions were.

The intent of this project was to develop a framework that creates a community whereby the heart, and subsequent actions, of the leader create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop. Key questions posited were:

- What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

- Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

- How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

- What are the evidences of transformation?

We will consider each question individually:

What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?

My belief that the key leaders' behavior actually models a culture of covenant was tested by isolating nine key leader behaviors which, in my opinion, would create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop, when practiced consistently.[195] Even with a small "n", strengths and weaknesses were evident in the pre-test alone. Generation Next cited a less-than-covenantal listening style of "listening but not always hearing (62)," while in the very next question relating a highly covenantal behavior (shielding this individual from a cascade of cans with my body (62). One needful adjustment in key leader behavior learned here is that *covert* covenantal behaviors (i.e. listening skills) are as important as pro-active, overt behaviors (i.e. shielding someone from falling debris).

I believe it is significant that four out of five respondents cited specific forward movement in the area of transparency. Though this was not a premeditated, specifically targeted area of intervention, I believe it is positive fallout as a result of focused, intentional practice of listening skills and the sensitivity and vulnerability that comes of that. In summary, these nine key leader behaviors, when practiced consistently, do seem to foster covenantal behavior.

Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?

In the context of this study it is not possible to definitively prove that a culture of covenant has a direct impact on how people work in team ministry.

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[195] See "Key Leader Behaviors", p. 83.

Ironically the survey pre and post-tests themselves, and the attending accountability and honesty of the Executive Team in responding to me, have caused me to target strategic areas for growth. My resulting covenantal behaviors will no doubt improve how the teams work together. More time on strategic intervention, and perhaps group training in covenantal behaviors, would likely go a long way to tying the culture of covenant with how people actually work in teams.

How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?

One assumption of this study is that the key leader's behaviors model a culture that is covenantal and eventually apparent in how teams function. Fun Friend noted in her survey post-test comment on covenant that, "There is definitely an underlying covenant among those associated with Coastlands. The continued support and communication through out [sic] the year is evidenced in the ease at which [sic] the team is able to come together at differing venues and work with each other (80)." Evidently year-long "support and communication" is one way a culture of covenant is fostered. Loyal Pal states regarding covenant, "Team members strive to understand each other and work out any differing views. Team members consider others on the team when making decisions. There is a concern as to how others would be affected by decisions (80)." From this response it is evident that the culture is transmitted horizontally from member to member, not exclusively from the key leader "down". This indication of mutuality in communication concerning a culture of covenant was not anticipated, but is encouraging. Another evidence of cross-team conveyance of the culture is

clear when the Executive Team sees it in one another. This is shown in the comment by Old Faithful, "G.N. is as committed to Coastlands as is Pam (80)," and in Loyal Pal's similar observation, "They encourage and mentor one another in the ministry (82)." In the final analysis, this study confirms that, although the key leader can model a culture of covenant, it can also be conveyed horizontally and modeled by the team members themselves.

What are the evidences of transformation?

When asked how they had changed, respondents indicated a range of answers from personal insight to generalized ministry observations. Loyal Pal and Old Faithful both indicated the effect of the key leader's transformation on their own understanding of relationships, whereas Fun Friend and True Colleague referenced the uniqueness of a culture of covenant—the genuineness and creativity of the approach, in particular. Generation Next cited growth in perseverance and patience. Views of ministry were largely affected in inspiring hope. True Colleague and Old Faithful were encouraged at the possibility of future ministry. Loyal Pal cited the importance of total dependence on the Holy Spirit. Both Fun Friend and Generation Next were challenged to stretch their understandings of ministry boundaries, becoming more open to changes in style and timeframe.

Respondents were unanimous in the affirmative when asked if Coastlands teams model a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation. Fun Friend and Old Faithful cited changes both in the key leader and a current team member. Both Fun Friend and Loyal Pal recognized that part-time or intern team members may not be as effective at it. Old Faithful indicated that transformation takes

time. Generation Next indicated personal transformation, and changes in the key leader and a former team member.

The Executive Team was asked if they had seen evidence of transformation in the lives of others they know (students, peers, family members), and if so, how? Generation Next cited the significant transformation of a former team member as a direct result of Coastlands. Ironically, Fun Friend cites transformation in Generation Next, specifically in ministry growth. Both Loyal Pal and True Colleague noticed the change in young people as a result of ministry from Coastlands teams. True Colleague went on to specify the age groups affected, including alumni. Old Faithful referenced change in the Coastlands team itself, as well as in the key leader.

In summary, respondents had been both changed and challenged, personally and in their understanding of ministry, via the modeling of a culture of covenant. They were unanimous in seeing transformation effected through Coastlands teams, and were able to name specific individuals or groups who had experienced transformation as a result of the modeling of a culture of covenant.

EVIDENCES OF TRANSFORMATION MATRIX	
Respondents	**Responses**
(1a) How have *you* changed as a result of observing Pam's transformation in endeavoring to create a culture of covenant?	
Generation Next	Encouraged to persevere through difficult times Made me more patient
Fun Friend	If we put on a happy face and do our job then walk away to the next thing, as I have been know to do in the past, we have short-circuited whatever good may have been started.

Loyal Pal	[Effective ministry] is allowing people to disappoint you or mess up without condemnation and unforgiveness [sic]…It is very risky and you can count on being hurt.
True Colleague	Pam's ministry has shown me once again and encouraged me to see that young people can be transformed by means other than Sunday School and Sunday morning worship. Seeing a small group of people (Coastlands) covenant together to allow Jesus to use them in transforming lives…
Old Faithful	My response to colleagues has been different, especially dealing with relationships. I have learned that in confrontation, the most important thing is to speak whatever the issue is in love.
(1b) How has your view of ministry been affected?	
Generation Next	Don't have preconceived notions of how something is supposed to look or go.
Fun Friend	We should not see our service to Him as open and shut but as a constant, regardless of how others respond. We must be transparent, humble and available beyond a set schedule/ timeframe
Loyal Pal	Total dependence on the Holy Spirit to continually work in transforming us into the image of Jesus is the only way we can do it.
True Colleague	Pam has helped renew in myself the possibilities of other ministries for me in the future.
Old Faithful	At this advanced age, rather than thinking I have less ministry, I fell that I have more ministry.
(2) In observing Coastlands teams, would you say they model a culture of covenant for the purpose of transformation? Why, or why not?	
Generation Next	I've seen changes in Pam, a former team member, myself…We are all influenced and changed by our relationships with those around us, and Coastlands teams spend significant amounts of time together. It's hard not to be transformed.

Fun Friend	I am sure [current team member] and Pam are doing this. I don't know how practical it is to assume interns/part-timers will be capable of this same ongoing ministry.
Loyal Pal	I think that there have been struggles in Coastlands when there is not an equal 'selling out' to the vision of the ministry…but there have been some powerful relationships and unity of vision also. Children know that the people that work with Pam are her 'friends'.
True Colleague	Yes…Their approach as a team is one of covenant relationship between team members and between the team and God. Pam cares and covenants with her team members…often at the cost of her own financial needs, to ensure that they are provided with what they need to fulfill the ministry purpose of spiritual transformation.
Old Faithful	Yes, they do. Pam and [current team member] do. In any ministry, I don't think you see immediate transformation. I think a period of time has to elapse before you see transformation in anybody.
(3) Have you seen evidence of transformation in the lives of others you know (students, peers, family members) as a result? If so, how?	
Generation Next	A former team member – great transformation occurred through a relationship that came about through Coastlands. Coastlands played a transformational role in [the former team member's] life as God used it to bring healing from deep old wounds.
Fun Friend	YES, the relationship that Pam and [team member] have is tops on that list. Not only did he come on board to work full time with Coastlands, he has added to the strength of the team and compliments her gifts and abilities. He in turn has reached out to many others with the same intensity and openness. She modeled, he followed and now they work together as peers doing as he was shown but with his own character and

	giftedness.
	Multiple members of our staff at Lakeside Camp have been greatly encouraged by the modeling Pam has shown over the years of serve [sic] with us. Many have stepped forward into greater service because of the encouragement and consistent message she has brought forth. Her example of acknowledging the gifts she sees in others and finding ways of incorporating them into the circumstances around her has been a great lesson for me. And I believe for those who have been on our counseling staff for a number of years; individuals who would not otherwise be found working together have been able to appreciate their differences and look forward to working together year after year.
Loyal Pal	I can see young people who have been affected by this ministry still in relationship with team members over several years' time. Some have even come on board for the time that the Lord has called them. And the ministry has made a huge impact on them and the choices they made for their lives.
True Colleague	Yes, I have seen many young people experience life changing experiences and growth as a result of Coastlands.

One of the greatest proofs of change is having former students come back each year during our Spiritual Emphasis Week to visit and even participate in the activities of the week. We had two young men in high school come back this year, three years after their eighth grade graduation, to help in Spiritual Emphasis Week. Many come just to visit with Miss Brady, [team member] or others because of the spiritual influence they have had in their lives. It is obvious that the students experience this culture of covenant because they are still living it. Students call |

	each year asking, when is Miss Brady coming? Some still keep in contact through letters and e-mail many years later after leaving our school. The current students always eagerly anticipate the week with Coastlands each year. The younger students enjoy the sessions each year because the active participation they experience in each session such as Bible ball, the Jesus cheer, the object lessons, etc. The important evidence of transformation in their lives is that many remember the lessons and memory verses from previous years. Several older students and graduates have cited the influence of Miss Brady in spiritual lives. One young lady is serving as a missionary in inner city New York and has stated to me that one of the positive influences was Miss Brady and [former team member]. Another young man recently has decided in the future to start his own ministry but desires to prepare for that possibility by working with Coastlands. Many others have talked about how Coastlands has been very important in their spiritual development.
Old Faithful	I've seen transformation in the team itself. I've actually seen joy in Coastlands. I've seen transformation in Pam. The key leader has a clearer understanding and knowledge of the gifts of her team members and relaxes when there are other people using their gifts.

The hypothesis, "Redemptive leaders create a culture of covenant," does seem to be confirmed by this study. The statements by survey respondents quoted previously indicate intentional covenantal behavior, both toward and amongst the

teams. As previously mentioned, the heart, and subsequent actions, of the leader ultimately create a culture in which covenant is likely to develop; it cannot be forced or rushed. A dictator may mandate and strong-arm a culture of terror; but redemptive leaders do not drive people, redemptive leaders *lead* people. The forward movement indicated in the survey post-test is a direct result of conscious, targeted, and strategic interventions mostly specific to listening and communication.[196] It is possible to behave in an increasingly covenantal manner.

The definitive test of a culture of covenant is to see its outworking over time amongst a variety of team members, and ultimately its transference from one generation to the next. It will be important over time to see how effective, if at all, my two practical strategic interventions will be (i.e. has it been possible to recruit new team members covenantally, as opposed to contractually? Has it fostered a culture of covenant to have a central location/ministry base?).

Other considerations for further study could include a revised survey pre and post-test based on the "Summary of Unsolicited Information (90)." Key leader weaknesses and other areas of concern could be monitored and improved over time. A second study of interest could be to compare/contrast intentional covenantal teams with intentional contractual teams. The intent of such a study would be to measure the comparative effectiveness of the teams in their venues. This study would answer the question, "Are covenanted teams more effective than contractual teams?" Survey respondents would be impartial, third party observers of both sets of teams. Finally, if I were to compile this particular survey again, I

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[196] See "Matrix of Strategic Interventions", p. 74.

would include as a component the question, "What key behaviors are covenantal in the context of this ministry?" It is possible that survey respondents would mention covenantal behaviors that were not listed. These would add significantly to this study.

Some closing insights that have presented themselves as I review the findings of this study are these:

- Is my predilection toward a culture of covenant in Coastlands teams a philosophical preference, or a necessity?

- Do I have an idealized view of what itinerating teams can accomplish?

- As covenantal behavior is difficult at best, is it reasonable or feasible as a ministry goal?

- To what extent can team members consciously and intentionally lay down their lives for one another?

- To what extent should unilateral covenantal commitment be expected from redemptive leaders?

- Is covenantal behavior a significant cultural influence in *any* organization, or only in ministry settings?

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

In considering the outcomes of this study, several significant limitations may be noted. First, the time span between the initial pre-test survey and post-test survey, two months and one week, was a relatively short slice of real time. Although significant, targeted change was enacted and commented on by survey respondents, I wonder how much more change would have been evident over a longer period of time. Targeted interventions, such as larger teams and a ministry base, are in the earliest stages of planning. Some significant changes may occur over time as these other goals are realized. It is said that it takes about twenty-one days to break an old habit or establish a new one. I wanted at least that long to work on the listening skill interventions.

A second significant limitation of this study is the small sample, n=5. This purposeful sample was small in number primarily because I wanted respondents who know me well and know the ministry and who are in covenantal relationship with me. Each respondent has known me for at least five years, and has seen the ministry morph over that time as well. A larger sample may have provided more raw information about technical aspects of the ministry, but given the highly personal nature of targeting key leader behaviors I opted for a smaller, more intimate "n". Because I believe that covenantal behavior is modeled in the heart attitudes and subsequent actions of the key leader, I selected respondents I believed would be able to answer those types of questions well.

Finally, any significant survey measuring increasingly covenantal behavior would need to be repeated over time to ensure ongoing personal growth, and to ensure that covenantal behaviors are being continually disseminated to teams at the venues. As other team leaders arise, it would be beneficial for them to create a self-study pre and post survey, and target the behaviors they would need intervention on.

There were several sidebar unintended consequences of the study. The first was that I received unsolicited, additional information from survey respondents that, if unrelated to the question at hand, actually revealed entirely different areas of strength or weakness. These alone could provide the raw material for another pre and post-test survey.

SUMMARY OF UNSOLICITED INFORMATION			
(Unintended Consequences)			
or			
"Answers to Questions Not Asked in the Survey"			
	Personal Areas	**Ministry Areas**	
O.F., p. 64	Key leader needs to develop patience with the Lord.	Teams need to be larger.	F.F., p. 64-65
O.F., L.P., p. 64	Key leader has very high expectations of self and team members.	It is difficult to build committed relationships in a context of missionary itinerancy.	F.F., p. 66
O.F., p. 67	Key leader is respected. Team members respect each other.	Some team members may not feel valued.	L.P., p. 67
F.F.,	Key leader is deeply hurt	This ministry is demanding	O.F.,

G.N., p. 68	when team members leave.	and inconvenient	p. 68
G.N., p. 69	Key leader sets an excellent example of showing honor.	There is much fulfillment and fruit from the ministry.	L.P., p. 69
		G.N. is as committed to this ministry as the key leader.	O.F., p. 80
		This ministry is an adventure.	G.N., p. 82

It is of interest that, even within the unsolicited information, there are polar opposite comments. Of particular note is Old Faithful's that, "This ministry is demanding and inconvenient," contrasted with Generation Next's, "This ministry is an adventure." These contrasting views help put the survey process in perspective. Executive Team members, although in some level of covenant with the key leader, clearly committed to their ministry, and motivated to help with this study, may see things profoundly differently. Another obvious juxtaposition that appeared several times in survey comments was the sheer difficulty and demanding nature of the ministry, coupled with the high level of regard for the quality of this ministry. This reinforces my understanding that Coastlands teams are the Marines of Christian Education. We will now examine the results of this study in light of the initial key questions.

A number of significant points have presented themselves during the course of this study. For one thing, I am amazed at how much pertinent information was obtained by the thirty survey questions. Even with an "n" of 5 quite a bit of information, especially relative to key leader behaviors, was

amassed. I learned that highly motivated leaders can change significant areas of behavior over a comparatively short period of time. Frankly, I realized that just being consciously aware of listening made a profound difference, both in what I was actually hearing, and in how I was being perceived.

Additionally, this study confirms that a genuine, prayerful desire to make covenantal behavior normative in my life is in the process of being answered. The incident of the "rain of Cokes" noted by Generation Next (62, 79) was not planned or a rehearsed behavior; it was instinctual. My prayer continues to be that current areas targeted for growth, such as listening, will eventually morph to the point of being so a part of who I am that they occur effortlessly.

A number of closing personal growth insights have presented themselves to me as I review the findings of this study. I am left pondering six major questions:

(1) Is my predilection toward a culture of covenant in Coastlands teams a philosophical preference, or a necessity?

I wonder if it is actually needful for teams to be covenantal, although I believe it is Biblical. As noted previously, a compare/contrast of the effectiveness of covenantal versus contracted teams may be helpful here.

(2) Do I have an idealized view of what itinerating teams can accomplish?

I wonder if I have idealized the effectiveness of itinerating teams in my mind. It has been said that everywhere the ministry teams of Paul went there was riot or revival. Are my high expectations of myself and others (Old Faithful, Loyal Pal (64) due to this?

(3) As covenantal behavior is difficult at best, is it reasonable, or feasible,

as a ministry goal?

In an ideal world, people would keep their commitments, be consistently loyal to the Lord and to one another, and eagerly outdo one another in showing honor. Is expecting people to clear that bar consistently a reasonable goal? Should covenantal behavior be insisted upon, or just aimed for, by the teams?

(4) To what extent can team members consciously and intentionally lay

down their lives for one another?

Although this is a clearly Biblical concept,[197] how does it "flesh out" in itinerating ministry teams? Would the evidences of sacrificial behavior be more obvious in a context of oppression or persecution? Can such behaviors be expected from team members who are occasional, who travel with us perhaps only twice a year?

(5) To what extent should unilateral covenantal commitment be expected

from redemptive leaders?

Jesus modeled perfect, sinless love toward others as a redemptive leader, often to people who rejected Him. To what extent can human leaders–even strong believers–consistently act in unilateral covenantal commitment?[198] It seems to me that this is the type of covenantal commitment the Lord modeled for us.

(6) Is covenantal behavior a significant cultural influence in *any*

organization, or only in ministry settings?

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[197] John 15:13
[198] See Appendix 6, "Love With No Return"

Biblical leaders desire to model Christlike attitudes and actions in their behaviors, including covenantal behavior in teams. What kind of influence would covenantal behavior have in other organizations? Would it significantly improve teamwork in research and development firms? Financial institutions? Sales groups? Would intentional covenantal behavior be possible for leaders who do not claim to be believers? Can covenantal behavior be transferred to any and all team endeavors, whether ministries or not? To what extent are they transferable to secular institutions?

The results of this study demonstrated that key leader behaviors can, and do, model covenantal attitudes and actions to team members. Redemptive leaders who are intentional about relationships can practice and grow in unilateral covenantal commitment toward those they serve. This culture of covenant does indeed effect heart transformation in both the key leader, team members and, as evidenced by the transformation matrix, the people groups being served by the teams. Key leader transformation in targeted areas significantly impacts the wider ministry, as evidenced by the post-test survey results. Finally, a culture of covenant can, and does, establish key relationships that can minister healing within the teams themselves, as evidenced in the transformation matrix.

In conclusion, covenantal commitment can be costly and painful, yet Biblical and God-honoring. Without the risk of vulnerability and a solid faith in the constancy of the Lord Jesus Christ, it would not be possible to hope for a culture of covenant. I close with the challenge of C. S. Lewis, so needful for redemptive leaders:

There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will beomce unbearable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside of Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is hell.[199]

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[199] C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 121.

KEY CONCEPTS OF THE REDEMPTIVE MODEL

(Drs. Rod Cooper and Harv Powers, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary)

External Doing		Tasks Accomplishments
↓	**COMPETENCE** (Capable, Fit, Qualified) **Confidence**	↓
	PRINCIPLE (Underlying truths which transcend situations) **Understanding**	
	CHARACTER (The deep structures of who we are: "Engraved") **Trust**	
	TRANSFORMATION (To morph: Change into another form, to change in inner character.) **Healing**	
	REDEMPTIVE (Purchasing, ransoming, rescuing from bondage) **Hope**	
Internal Being		**Purpose Meaning**

MATRIX OF CULTURAL ARCHETYPES[Note]

Archetype Title				
	(1) **Bureaucratic**	**(2)** **Matrix R+D**	**(3)** **Familial** **Sensing/** **Feeling**	**(4)** **Organic/** **Adaptive**
Culture Traits Modeled	Sensing/ thinking	Intuitive/ Thinking	Sensing/ Feeling	Intuitive/ feeling
	Values external data, processed logically using formal procedures.	Values inner, psychic resources for data, processed logically using formal procedures.	Values external data, processed logically using formal procedures.	Values inner, psychic resources for data.
	Hierarchical	Hierarchical	Trusts impulses and emotional responses as a basis for decisions.	Trusts impulses and Emotional responses as a basis for decisions.
	Clear roles	Clear roles.		
	Deadlines	Deadlines	Tuned into group responses.	Tuned into group responses.
	Tuned in to leader responses.	Tuned in to leader responses.		

[Note] For further treatment, see Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership,* 159.

COASTLANDS CONSULTANTS EXECUTIVE TEAM SURVEY

Please select one of the following answers for each of the questions listed below.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

KEY LEADER BEHAVIORS

(1) The key leader seeks and implements the advice of others.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(2) The key leader models good communication skills.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(3) They key leader can be trusted to look out for my welfare.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(4) The key leader acts as a networking catalyst, releasing others into ministry.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(5) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming a better listener.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(6) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more patient.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(7) I experience the leader as safe when I approach her with a problem.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(8) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more transparent.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(9) I see evidence that the key leader is becoming more adept in her mentoring skills.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

Use the space below for other comments on key leadership behaviors.

CULTURE

(10) I see a common vision and purpose in the Coastlands teams.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(11) Coastlands teams communicate freely with one another.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(13) Coastlands teams are considerate of others.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(14) Coastlands teams model a culture that is Biblically based.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(15) It seems like the people on Coastlands teams have always worked together.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(16) Coastlands teams are able to effectively minister in the cultures they serve.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

Use the space below for other comments on culture.

COVENANT

(17) I see evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(18) Coastlands teams treat one another with mutual respect.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(19) Coastlands teams maintain coaching contact after leaving the "on site" portion of their ministry.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(20) I see evidence of loyalty and committed love among team members.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(21) I see evidence that team members have been drawn together by God's Spirit.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(22) I see team members asking one another for help.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another, in Coastlands teams.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

Use the space below for other comments on covenant.

TEAMS

(24) Team members are committed to helping each other on the field.

        Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(25) Teams are versatile, able to make last-minute changes.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(27) Team members operate in the spirit of Romans 12:10, "Outdo one another in showing honor."

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(28) Although team members change, the quality of the ministry remains highly effective.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(29) When one team member is overwhelmed, the others step in, even without being asked.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

(30) It would be fun to be on a Coastlands team.

Never   Occasionally   Often   Always

Use the space below for other comments on teams.

APPENDIX 4

MATRIX OF KEY QUESTIONS AND BIBLICAL BENEFITS

Four Biblical Benefits of Covenant

Key Questions	(1) Models the unconditional *agape* love of God	(2) Provides a context for developing vulnerability and trust	(2) Makes it safe to fail	(4) Secures the relationship
(1) What are the key leader behaviors that foster a culture of covenant within Coastlands teams?	(3) trusted to look out for my welfare. (6) becoming more patient	(1) seeks/ implements advice (2) good communication skills (7) safe to go to (8) becoming more transparent	(4) catalyst, releasing others (9) becoming more adept/ skills	(5) better listener

(2) Does a culture of covenant impact how people work in team ministry?	(13) considerate of others (15) seems they have always worked together (24) committed to helping each other on the field (25) versatile, able to make last-minute changes	(22) asking one another for help (29) team members step in, even without being asked	(10) common vision and purpose (12) safe to fail (16) effectively minister in the cultures they serve (28) quality of ministry highly effective	
(3) How is a culture of covenant communicated to teams?	(14) models a culture of that is Biblically based (18) treat one another with mutual respect (21) drawn together by God's Spirit (27) showing mutual honor	(11) teams communicate freely (23) ability to learn from one another (26) teams are open, allowing new members, releasing old members (30) it is fun to be on a Coastlands team!		(17) evidence of collegial friendship amongst team members (19) maintain contact after leaving the "on site" portion (20) evidence of loyalty/ committed love among team members

APPENDIX 5

MATRIX OF STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

Targeted Area	Survey Question	Relevance to Creating a Culture of Covenant	Strategic Intervention
(1) Listening/ communication skills	(2) Key leader models good communication skills. (6) Key leader is becoming more patient.	Listening patiently and working on discerning non-verbal cues will open up communication amongst team members.	Leader will read and implement strategies from the book *Quick-to-Listen Leaders* by Dave Ping and Anne Clippard.
(2) Issues relative to loss of team members/ recruitment	(12) It is safe to fail as a Coastlands team member. (26) Teams are open, allowing new members to come in, old ones to move on.	It needs to be "safe" for people to move on, as well as come aboard. It also needs to be "safe" for the key leader.	Leader will, with Coastlands council assistance, initiate new recruitment endeavors. More team members = less sense of failure each time someone moves on.
(3) Central location/ ministry base	(20) I see evidence of loyalty/ committed love among team members. (23) I see evidence of "iron sharpening iron", an ability to learn from one another in Coastlands teams.	It is difficult to sustain covenantal commitment without meeting at least occasionally as team members. Although we do this on the road, it would help to have a Coastlands "place."	Leader will, with Coastlands council assistance, begin to seek a central location/home base for the ministry.

LOVE WITH NO RETURN

Pam Brady

July 20, 2005

Some are wounded by a hurt so deep
They cannot work, or eat, or sleep.
They cannot trust 'cause it hurts too much.
They can't receive a human touch.

Hearts have been pounded, grounded, confounded.
They cannot conceive of a grace unbounded
By the enemies' lies – they've been surrounded.
But when You heal our hearts – we're astounded (at the)

CHORUS:

(I need the) Sound of a love that cannot be heard
The presence of the Spirit, that I may learn
To convey Your healing – without a word
And give the love – with no return.

Some have been used, confused, abused.
Their hearts were broken and their spirits bruised.
They've come to believe that they do not matter.
Their dreams are gone and their hopes are shattered.

But even as broken hearts are rending
Jesus is cleansing – healing and mending.
To all your pain there is an ending
Because in His people the Lord is sending (the)

BRIDGE:

Jesus – break my heart. Your love – to impart.

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Brief Sketch

Known for her contagious enthusiasm and creativity, Pam Brady has been a conference speaker at Christian Education venues for over twenty years. As the founder of Coastlands Consultants, Pam leads teams of dedicated believers with mentor's hearts who are committed to relationally-based ministry. She holds a Masters Degree in Theology from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and is in candidacy for her Doctor of Ministry. Pam's passion is to see mentoring teams trained and released across New England.